

The Battles of Germantown:
Public History and Preservation in America's Most Historic Neighborhood
During the Twentieth Century

Dissertation

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By

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Abstract

This dissertation examines how public history and historic preservation have changed during the twentieth century by examining the Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Founded in 1683, Germantown is one of America's most historic neighborhoods, with resonant landmarks related to the nation's political, military, industrial, and cultural history. Efforts to preserve the historic sites of the neighborhood have resulted in the presence of fourteen historic sites and house museums, including sites owned by the National Park Service, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the City of Philadelphia.

Germantown is also a neighborhood where many of the ills that came to beset many American cities in the twentieth century are easy to spot. The 2000 census showed that one quarter of its citizens live at or below the poverty line. Germantown High School recently made national headlines when students there attacked a popular teacher, causing severe injuries. Many businesses and landmark buildings now stand shuttered in community that no longer can draw on the manufacturing or retail economy it once did.

Germantown's twentieth century has seen remarkably creative approaches to contemporary problems using historic preservation at their core. What was tried, together with what succeeded and failed, help to explain how urban planning, heritage tourism, architectural preservation and museum studies have evolved in the country overall. Each decade offered examples of attempted solutions and success stories, frequently setting

standards for historic preservation nationally. In Germantown's case, history was identified early and throughout the century as a useful tool to build into an economic engine for the neighborhood. And yet, history has not proved to be as beneficial to the neighborhood as had been hoped. Why did history not provide the development spark that people thought it would?

The answer to this question is beset with many ironies to be explored in this study. Germantown's greatest feature, its history, often got in the way. More specifically, the practice of history, locally and more generally, did not always help Germantown's expressed goal to make its history more effective in the economic development of the neighborhood. Beset with many competing groups and unable to overcome entrenched traditions, Germantown's primary selling point, its historic assets, often paradoxically served as a barrier to achieving those goals. Institutional, systemic, and cultural factors have all played in to how Germantown has not been able to take full advantage of its history for the benefit of the entire community.

Germantown offers a way to study life in a twentieth century city through the ways that people think about history. Germantown history shows how thinking about preservation went from a notion of attempting to seal off the past in reverent isolation to one of the responsible management of change. The former required authority, the latter requires respect for multiple narratives. The process required the evolution, over many years and many contested issues, of the historical profession as whole.

Dedication

I wish to dedicate this dissertation to the many great history teachers who have blessed my life, beginning with my mother, my father, my wife, and my son.

Acknowledgements

Because I have taken so long to complete my dissertation, I have benefited from the support and encouragement of scores of people. At the Germantown Historical Society, volunteers Nick Thaete, Eugene Stackhouse, Judith Callard, and James Duffin have provided frequent assistance and support. Previous board or staff members such as Stephanie G. Wolf, Barbara Silberman, Jack Asher, Earle Barber, Jr., Henry Magaziner, and Mark F. Lloyd, have been gracious in providing excellent perspective in discussions. Staff members past and present at Germantown historic sites have also provided help filling in gaps in my understanding, among them Raymond G. Shepard, Jeff Groff, Jean Mitchell, Shirley Turpin Parham, Elizabeth Shellenberger, Sandra MacKenzie Lloyd, and Galen Horst-Martz.

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Early versions of the dissertation have appeared as conference papers presented to the Gilder Lehrman Conference, the American Association of Museums, the National Preservation Conference, and the Teaching American History seminar for Philadelphia School District teachers. I am particularly grateful to the board of directors and staff of the Johnson House Historic Site and of Cliveden of the National Trust for their support of my research and writing, and for allowing me to complete the necessary steps toward the dissertation while serving as executive director. Najah Palm, G. Carol Johnson, Cornelia Swinson, Robert MacDonnell, Randall Miller, Anne M. Roller, Phillip Seitz, Tracy Muhammad, John Reese, and Rick Fink, as well as a corps of well-prepared guides, have provided wonderful models of professionalism, creativity, and initiative that have proved to be a font of inspiration on which I could draw.

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Field of Study

Major Field: History

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgments.....	v
Vita	viii
List of Maps	x
Chapter 1: Introduction to Germantown: The Place, the Past, and the Problem.....	1
Chapter 2: “Souvenirs and Mementoes of Washington”: Preserving Independence, and Independent-Mindedness, in Germantown, 1900-1925.....	67
Chapter 3: “Not All Germantown Cherishes Yesterday”: Germantown History Growing Apart, 1926-1949.....	141
Chapter 4: “Condemnation and Restoration”: Creativity and Conflict in Germantown, 1950-1979.....	215
Chapter 5: Toward a Shared History: The Reformation of the Germantown Historical Community, 1980-2000.....	298
Conclusion: Rewriting Germantown History.....	379
References.....	391

List of Maps

Map 1: Map of Contemporary Germantown.....	14
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Chapter One

An Introduction to Germantown:

The Place, the Past, and the Problem

It takes great effort to make public history truly a shared endeavor. Writing and reading history are done primarily in isolation and are, at their essence, individual activities. Studies of public history have described how individual personal identity is easily wrapped up in local history and one's sense of place, helping determine one's own roots and the larger context for identity.¹ But the term "public history" suggests a sense of the past that transcends the personal to something shared or mediated in a common sphere. This study examines how the work of public history has changed in the twentieth century by examining historic preservation in one neighborhood, the Germantown section of Philadelphia.

Germantown is a very large and very old neighborhood where many of the ills that came to beset many American cities in the twentieth century are easy to spot. Although many neighborhoods in older communities have tended to revive where there are significant historical resources or unique architecture, this has not occurred in Germantown. This section of Philadelphia has been for decades a poor, high-crime neighborhood of Philadelphia. The 2000 census saw 25% of the 46,794 residents of

Germantown living below the poverty line (compared with 11% statewide). The large minority population (80% as of 2000) is generally disconnected from the community's history. Given Germantown's great historic resources, the way blight, crime, job loss, and population decline played out amid well-preserved buildings reveals more than just what happened in cities. Germantown offers a way to study life in a twentieth century city through the ways that people think about history.

Germantown's twentieth century has often seen remarkably creative approaches to contemporary problems using historic preservation at their core. What was tried, together with what succeeded and failed, help to explain how urban planning, heritage tourism, architectural preservation and museum studies have evolved in the country overall. Each decade offered examples of attempted solutions and success stories, frequently setting standards for historic preservation nationally. In Germantown's case, history was identified early and throughout the century as a useful tool to build into an economic engine for the neighborhood. The great spine for Germantown is its main street, Germantown Avenue, which is its one great shared space and the scene of much of the action in the neighborhood—as well as of what made Germantown historic. The street was once called “The Great Road”. The twentieth century can be seen as one continual effort to make the Avenue “great” again. So what happened? Why did history not provide the development spark that people thought it would?

The answer to these questions is beset with many ironies to be explored in this study. The short answer is that Germantown's greatest feature, its history, often got in the way. More specifically, the practice of history, locally and more generally, did not always help Germantown's expressed goal to make its history more effective in the economic development of the neighborhood. Beset with many competing groups and unable to overcome entrenched traditions, Germantown's primary selling point often paradoxically served as a barrier to achieving those goals.

How was the neighborhood's history supposed to bring about economic benefit? Progress would have been measured by a local tourist economy that capitalized on Germantown's multiple house museums and many popular heritage festivals, or used its well-preserved historic architecture to generate real estate value to the community. Yet Germantown's efforts to preserve and present its history, even when in keeping with the practice of the historic profession at the time, have often inhibited sustained success or lasting local and regional progress. Germantown shows how public history can, if not given great care, fall prey to private interpretations of a community's heritage that put it at odds with expressed public desires for the whole. The tensions between private and public are only one of the dichotomies faced by public historians.

The work of historic preservation and of public history involves other sets of dichotomies that have to be managed. Once a person or group sets out to preserve an

artifact, document, or building, one quickly faces questions, such as whether the item provides meaning to a specific individual or to the public at large. Will the item celebrate the past or provide a critical viewpoint to it? Does the item explain a local connection to the past or something regional or even more general? The effort to conserve something involves both a curatorial component as well as one that puts it into contemporary context that explains now. This raises the question of whether the item is to be preserved, or set off from the present, or used to explain things currently. Sometimes the innate desire to keep things set off will prevail, unless one manages the dichotomies in a way that allows for more than innate instinct. Eventually these dichotomies add up to a question of whether one narrative is served, or whether multiple narratives are allowed into the explanation of the artifacts use or importance. For Germantown, the narrative of nostalgia for the past frequently collided with one of hope and progress.

How thinking about history has changed in the twentieth century has involved the responses to these dichotomies by volunteers and trained professionals alike. Historian Richard Rabinowitz has specifically described how thinking about the past for public use has actually been a study in how an authoritarian view of the past ultimately grew into a dialogue about the use of the past to help explain the present.² But the process did not simply happen. Rather, initial steps to keep a historic item or site preserved and set apart had to develop into a dialogue about what matters only as a result of clashes among a

variety of viewpoints. Germantown is an especially rich case to study how these processes played out, for there are many paradoxes at tension with one another, and the lens of public history shows how people responded to contradictions as they attempted to make meaning of the neighborhood.

The interplay of factors that made this so—institutional, systemic, and cultural reasons—have contributed to the way Germantown looks now, a lively urban hodgepodge of jumbled storefronts in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century buildings on Germantown Avenue. Germantown history shows how thinking about preservation went from a notion of attempting to seal off the past in reverent isolation to one of the responsible management of change. The former required authority, the latter requires respect for multiple narratives. Not just reading and writing history, but the preservation and public presentation of the past too have formidable private and subjective elements, which, if not broadened, can often prevent a genuinely shared history. To be truly useful to the goals of the community, and responsive to its changes, requires concerted effort to craft a shared history, even among next-door neighbors.

Germantown the Place

Located six miles northwest of downtown Philadelphia, Germantown is one of America's most historic neighborhoods. It is also one that offers provocative examples

of how people consider the past. Originally part of 5,700 acres that William Penn sold to two groups from the Rhine region of what is now Germany, German Township was a processing center, made up of a diverse group of craftsmen and cottage industries, where raw materials from outlying counties were turned into finished goods for sale at market in Philadelphia (such as with butchering, weaving, and tanning). Bounded by the Wissahickon Creek on the west, the Wingohocking Creek to the east, its southern boundary is now North Philadelphia and the northern-most boundary is Philadelphia's highest point, Chestnut Hill. The development of Germantown up to the beginning of the twentieth century laid the groundwork for two great constants in Germantown history—continual change in its population and a sense that Germantown was its own place, separate from Philadelphia.

Originally a township independent of Philadelphia, Germantown's claims to national attention stem from several important events. The establishment of Germantown as a permanent German settlement in America in 1683 put into place William Penn's bold ideas of religious toleration of different faiths in one colony, bringing Quakers to Pennsylvania together with Mennonites, Dunkards, and other groups that had been unwelcome in England and Continental Europe. The American Revolution saw a full-scale battle sprawl over Germantown's streets in 1777, one of the largest engagements of the War for Independence. In the early American republic, Germantown provided the

temporary home of President George Washington and his cabinet in 1793, which many years later became known as the “Germantown White House”.

In 1688 four Germantown settlers drafted a protest against slavery within the Dutch-German Quaker community that is considered to be the earliest anti-slavery document made public by whites in North America. At least one house served as an Underground Railroad station before the Civil War, something that was only really uncovered toward the end of the twentieth century. One of the many neighborhood sites preserved as a house museum, Wyck is considered the oldest house in Philadelphia that still stands. And seven buildings remain of the complex surrounding the Rittenhouse paper mill, the first paper mill in America. In many ways, Germantown’s history touches on several of the most salient chapters of America’s struggle for religious toleration, freedom, and independence.

Given its numerous landmarks in America’s political, industrial, cultural, and military history, Germantown has long been a source of fascination for historians (amateur and professional), preservationists, planners, and developers. Germantown’s history is so rich that it has frequently been the subject of regional and national attention. The man widely considered to be Philadelphia’s first historian, John Fanning Watson (1779-1860), was also Germantown’s. The first-ever issue of the national history journal, *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* in 1877 featured a comprehensive

history of the Battle of Germantown. Architects working on the Depression-era Historic American Buildings Survey began the path-breaking national survey of historic structures by examining twelve houses in Germantown. The National Park Service has served as a steward of one Germantown site (the Deshler Morris House) since 1948 and the National Trust for Historic Preservation of another (Cliveden) since 1972. From the 1950s to the 1970s, some of the nation's top urban planners devoted their energies to devise solutions to Germantown's economic decline and population loss mostly based on capitalizing on its historic assets.

Germantown has also drawn the attention of world-class artists, writers and architects, many of them home-grown, including Gilbert Stuart, James and George Willson Peale, the Lambdin family, Benton Spruance, Violet Oakley, Frederick Winslow Taylor, and even briefly Louisa May Alcott and Edgar Alan Poe, among many others. The serenity of its shady, breezy surroundings only six miles from the heat and occasional epidemics of Philadelphia drew not only German and Dutch immigrants in the late 1600s, but also wealthy English who maintained country estates there in the early 1700s, including some of the most influential figures in Pennsylvania. For instance, colonial secretary James Logan's home, Stenton, located at the southern-most border of Germantown, became its first house museum in 1900. Cliveden, the home of prominent Pennsylvania jurist Benjamin Chew, was the site of the 1777 Battle of Germantown

mentioned earlier. That a variety of religious and ethnic groups found home there led to innovations in education, as progressive teachers such as Bronson Alcott established schools as incubators for different approaches to learning in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries. Of the 1700s and 1800s, it has been observed that, whether for its schools, vacation, or country estates, “it seems as though everybody who was anybody came to Germantown for one reason or another, at one time or another.”³

Set apart from Philadelphia, Germantown did draw people to move to it, or through it. A paradox for Germantown was that the pastoral aspect of life in Germantown helped to make it both a site for industry and a kind of summer resort area. The presence of many streams and creeks provided Germantown with mill sites for industries such as grain, paper, carpets, textiles, and saw milling. By the mid-eighteenth century, Germantown had become a diverse hub of commerce, what historian David Contosta has called a “strip village,” with houses and shops fronting along Germantown Road. Once the “Great Road”, later Main Street, Germantown Avenue runs from the Delaware River in Center City, Philadelphia all the way up through German Township and into outlying counties.

Encouraged by George Washington’s lead in 1793, prosperous Philadelphians made their way up Germantown Avenue to spend their summers in the shade and breeze-filled comfort of Germantown. By the Civil War there were dozens of Victorian

mansions west of Germantown Avenue, adding to the architectural richness of the area's wealth of colonial brick and stone structures. Inns and taverns, already plentiful along the Avenue, grew to include a few luxury hotels in outlying parts of the township that offered relief from the heat of summertime Philadelphia. The advent of the railroad in 1832 began what antiquarians like Watson and Deborah Logan, from her home at Stenton, saw as the loss of Germantown's old character. When a second rail line was added in 1881, the process of suburbanization continued, though by then Germantown was a "suburb" within the city limits, as well as a home to major manufacturers and large factories.

The township was the scene of continual mobility, with settlements and smaller neighborhoods springing up with the arrival of a group of immigrant families for a few seasons before moving out to other parts of Pennsylvania. The original township came to include Germantown and two neighborhoods surrounding Germantown Avenue, Chestnut Hill and Mt. Airy. Larger plots of farm land and outbuildings opened up behind the structures fronting the Avenue. The relationship of the road to the buildings conveyed a feeling of a German village, but one that was distinctly urban in its mixture of continental German and Dutch mingling with many English. For instance, there really was not a permanent market square and only a few streets intersected the north-south running Germantown Avenue. Other than a few stone buildings, not a lot was considered

permanent until building booms occurred in the 1740s-1760s and after the revolution, with several public buildings being established in the growing prosperity of the Federal Era.⁴ Historian Stephanie G. Wolf's phrase, an "urban village," aptly captures the distinction of the community being a center of industry and merchandising away from the city, toward the hinterlands, but tied to the land in many ways.⁵ Wolf's analysis of the founding period of Germantown identified the characteristics of population diversity and continual refreshment as mainstays in Germantown's development, with waves of newcomers discovering the opportunity in Penn's colony could find in Germantown. This mobility persisted well into the twentieth century, at least until the 1960s, when its population stabilized as a largely African American community, where it has remained for over forty years.

Population grew after the Civil War, with the rise of manufacturing economy in lower or eastern Germantown. Industries and workers' housing had located away from the colonial and Victorian mansions of west Germantown to the east side of town, bordering the industrialized section of North Philadelphia. In 1881 Reading Railroad built a freight yard at Wayne Junction, the southern boundary of Germantown, which attracted even more factories and shops to the area. Eventually the list of employers included Midvale Steel, Tastykake Baking, the Philadelphia Lawn Mower Company, and Atwater Kent Radio.⁶ With population growth (to 70,000 in 1900), the old German

Township had become a much different section of Philadelphia than had been experienced by Washington.

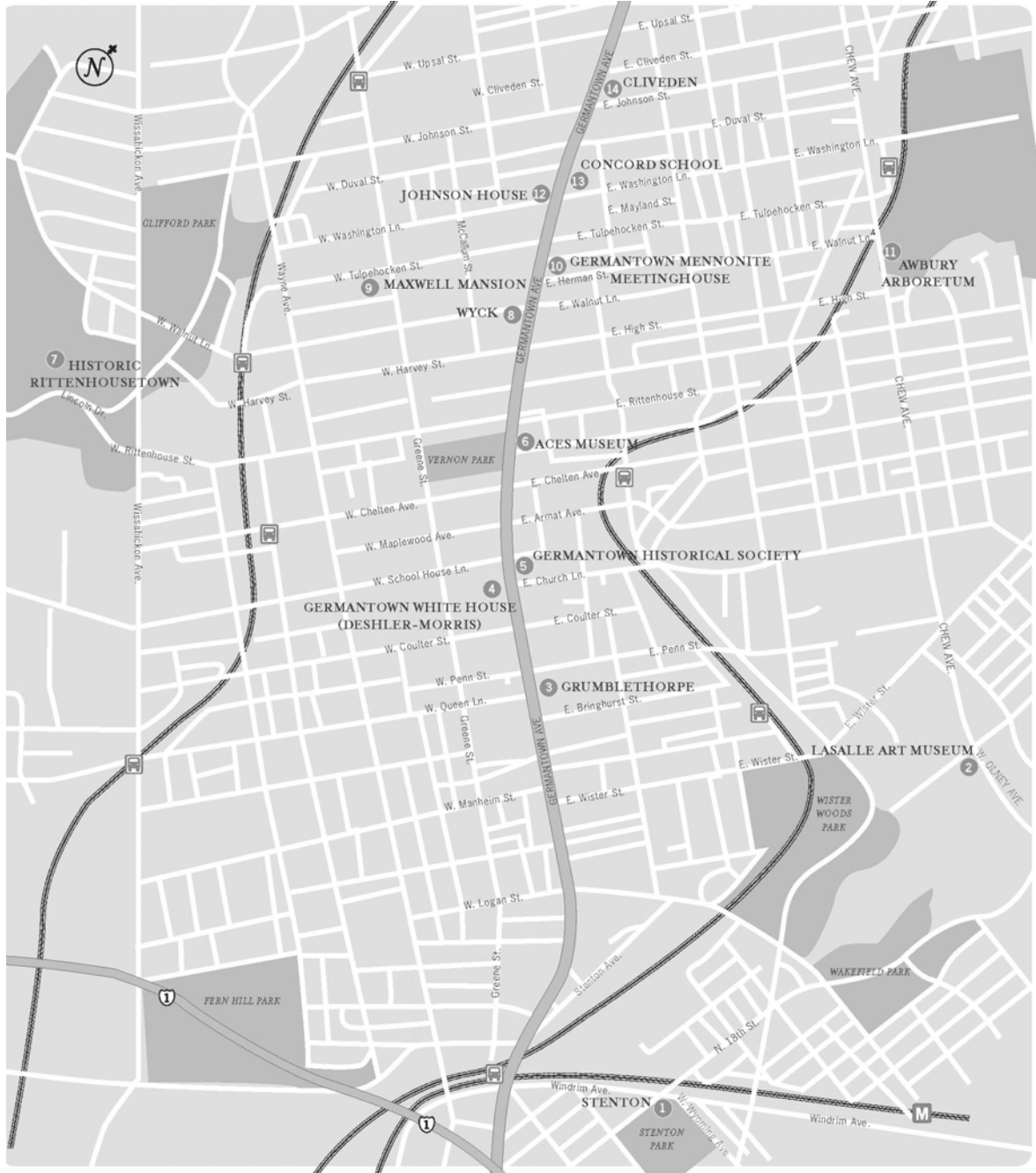
Germantown was able to thrive in both the eras of water-driven mills like the Rittenhouse's and steel mills like Midvale, bridging two phases of industrialization. Immigrants and migrants came to Germantown for the jobs in its industries, leading to worker homes and more diverse ethnic groups. Rowhouse neighborhoods began to spring up alongside Victorian mansions as the neighborhood's built environment reflected its diversity. Until the 1990s, a trolley ran down Germantown Avenue through all sectors of the community, connecting shops in Chestnut Hill in the north, to the factories of North Philadelphia on Germantown's southern boundary.

The housing stock and population by 1900 reflected the increasing demographic complexity that Germantown was gradually coming to know. The people who lived there consisted of a mix of working, middle and upper classes, and a growing diversity of ethnic groups, such as Italians, Irish, and African Americans.⁷ Historian Russell Kazal has demonstrated in his history of German immigration to America that, while in the popular imagination in 1900 Germantown was a suburban haven for middle and upper classes, in fact by then it was also a stable industrial working class community.⁸ While a very high 41% of Germantown's population was employed in white collar jobs or upper-class lifestyles, this was seen as a change from only a few decades earlier when it would

have been well over half. Mixed with a service class in support of the middle and upper classes (a service class that included unskilled and semi-skilled workers), the industrial working class made up over half the rest of the working population. Most of the population lived east of Germantown Avenue, with heads of households of unskilled or semi-skilled making up the vast majority of the population of the eastern side of town. In some ways East Germantown was by 1900 reminiscent of the old urban village as it was the scene of rowhouses, dyeworks, textile mills, and machine shops.⁹

Meanwhile, western Germantown, with its large estates (many of which would become historic house museums), private schools (such as Germantown Academy and Germantown Friends School), and the Cricket Club, became associated with the staid, aristocratic past, rather than the bustling present.¹⁰ The mixture of the immigrant workers and upper-class estates combined to create essentially a middle-class section of Philadelphia. The mix could be seen most evident on Germantown Avenue, where shops, restaurants, and the trolley created a shopping and public transportation hub at the intersection with Cheltenham Avenue. People shopping or taking trolleys found the busy streets mixed with shared public spaces such as Vernon Park—a public green that evolved from the lawn of the eighteenth century Wister Mansion to become the neighborhood's de facto village green and the scene of several civic festivals.

Ethnically the diversity of backgrounds roughly equaled the city of Philadelphia



Map 1: Map of the contemporary layout of Germantown, including the 14 historic sites and museums. Germantown Avenue runs through the center of the neighborhood.

as a whole. Germantown had long before 1900 lost its “Germanness.” In fact, the German influence had waned so much since its highpoint in 1783, that German-Americans, as Kazal described, “were a small and scattered minority with a relatively weak set of local ethnic institutions” by 1900.¹¹ 43% of the population of Germantown was native-born Caucasian (including people of Colonial German descent), 25% Irish, 16% British, 8.2% German, and 5% African American. A housing boom at the turn of the century accelerated the influx of Italian and Irish immigrants, but largely for the white population “Germantown was a middle class amalgam with English and German colonial roots.”¹²

For the African-American population, which will become a major focus of this study, the beginning of the twentieth century represented a major growth spurt, reflecting the changes to the social economy of Germantown after the Civil War. Prior to the 1860s one could number black Germantowners in the dozens. Even considering that the low count might reflect poorer or migrant residents slipping through the census takers’ measurements, the Germantown black population was small. It numbered 113 in 1840, 119 in 1850 (compared to Philadelphia neighborhoods with large African-American populations, like Moyamensing with 2300 blacks). Of these, only half were born in Pennsylvania, while the remainder generally came from states of the upper South, such as Delaware, Maryland, and Northern Virginia.¹³ Generally speaking, in the nineteenth

century, blacks lived in Germantown primarily in one of three sections: one was the industrial east side (along the mills of the Wingohocking Creek, near what is now LaSalle University); the second was near Rittenhouse and Haines Street (along what was known as “Poor House Lane”) near Germantown High School; and third at the intersection of Washington Lane and Germantown Avenue, on the outskirts of town where one of the area’s few busy intersections offered service jobs at inns and taverns or opportunities for hat and shoe making near the bustling tanneries there.

This demographic make-up was enough to alarm some in Germantown, especially given the growth spurt that the community witnessed near the end of the nineteenth century. Observers saw the changes and contributed to a prevailing fear of European immigrants and migrants moving in from the South to change what had been. “Old landmarks are rapidly disappearing within a swirl of our tornado-like new world of progress,” observed the authors of the *History of Old Germantown* in 1907.¹⁴ While the number had not risen much higher by 1880, by 1900 there were nearly 2000 African Americans and by 1915 there numbered over 4000 African Americans.¹⁵ This was evident in the growth of institutions like churches and schools, such as the Mt. Zion Baptist Church in 1896, the long-lasting Hill School and the Somerville Colored School that served the African-American community, where fifty years prior there had been only one African Methodist Episcopal congregation and one Baptist church (which met in

small homes on Poor House Lane) and few schools that included black students. By 1914 there was a Catholic mission for blacks, St. Catherine of Sienna, funded in part by Katherine Drexel, the Philadelphia philanthropist turned founder of a religious order. But even with these aspects of continual diversity, it was for class as much as ethnic reasons, however, that by 1900, one could speak of “two Germantowns.”

Such a formulation might be too dichotomous, however, because the community had multiple levels of diversity and division, as if many Germantowns existed in one place. Depending on the moment and the issue being addressed, the interplay of class, ethnic background, and one’s sense of the past helped determine to which Germantown one belonged, and to which clubs, heritage groups, and neighborhood associations. Separatism was encouraged, furthermore, rather than mollified, by the many religious groups. As Robert Gregg showed in his study of African American churches, the impulse to create more and different congregations represented a way that immigrants and migrants into Philadelphia could establish their own identity solidarity.¹⁶ Many groups were interested in history, so many in fact that competing heritage festivals and multiple house museums devoted to specific facets of the past came to be the norm. Even after population declined, the propensity to maintain separate associations persisted.

The plethora of organizations and associations became another civic characteristic that reflected divisions in the neighborhood. As of 2009 Germantown has 52 community

or neighborhood associations and 9 community development corporations. On the one hand, the presence of so many civic organizations showed the vibrancy and health of a varied and articulate population. On the other, it led to a condition that made it hard for groups to work together. The solution to a given issue was rarely found in the formation of a coalition. Instead, the response to a situation more likely took the form of creating a new club, congregation, or museum. Ironically, even the goal of consensus proved to be more a factor in fragmentation rather than forging alliances. For instance, when residents emphasized unity in group decision-making, a Quaker tradition in meetings, the process often contributed to inflexibility. Excessive deliberation would breed intransigence and drive some members to form entirely new groups. For instance, the longtime “orthodox” Germantown Quaker meeting and its school is located a block away from the Hicksite splinter meeting and school. Germantown’s tendency toward many organizations led to the 92 different congregations which now populate Germantown Avenue.¹⁷

The twentieth century would indeed be a “tornado” that wrought many changes. By 1900 Germantown was a bustling section of Philadelphia, with many factories and immigrant groups to work in them. Its local economy and population crested by 1930. By 1950, it had entered a long period of economic decline and population loss. The 1960s saw a period of arguments over ambitious plans involving the federal government to reconfigure Germantown Avenue along with the increasing empowerment of the

neighborhood's African American population. By the end of the 1970s, the neighborhood's decline set the course, with political infighting stifling myriad projects that promised some sort of economic revitalization. The 1980s and 1990s saw the neighborhood achieve a kind of stasis with its population and levels of crime, while different community efforts to bring about economic gain involving history promised revitalization that did not come. Germantown in 2009 is a community that is 73% African American working class. Over one quarter of its population live at or below the poverty line. There are few major employers and virtually none of the manufacturing presence that had been such a force earlier can be found, aside from the shells of empty factories which dot the landscape.

Germantown, the Historic Place

To maintain and present the township's connections to these events, the Germantown Site and Relic Society was established in 1900. The Society brought forth into the twentieth century efforts to memorialize, preserve, and collect the mementos from the colonial and revolutionary past. It did so by institutionalizing ways of remembering that were established during the nineteenth century. Today, the presence of 14 historic sites testifies to a century's worth of preservation efforts.

The key event in the evolution of Germantown's identity was its consolidation

into the city government of Philadelphia in 1854. Consolidation meant the loss of Germantown's separate status and a threat to its own history. On the one hand, consolidation meant that Germantown lost its real political independence. On the other, it meant that Germantown hung on to its separateness.

The modern system of Philadelphia city government after consolidation in 1854 amounted to a collection of separate sections of the region, areas such as Tacony, Frankford, and Manayunk, which, like Germantown, had their own structures and traditions. Even today, Philadelphia is neighborhood-identified. For instance neighborhoods such as Germantown, Tacony, Frankford, Manayunk, and many others each have their own historical society. The collection of various local entities made the coherent and independent sections of Philadelphia unusually strong, which had implications throughout the twentieth century. As we will see in Chapter Four of this study, it is one of the factors that prevented centralized control by the city over implementing projects like urban renewal.

The 1854 consolidation of Germantown into the city helped make the impact of change all the more acute, and the sense of separateness even more pronounced. For at that moment, Germantown had already been collecting and developing its own "memory infrastructure".¹⁸ This term aptly frames the varieties of efforts that included preservation projects, placement of memorials and monuments, establishment of historic

sites and museums, and advocacy for public action that supplied the community with “the totems of civic memory.” Preservationists in Germantown worked according to a paradigm set out by John Fanning Watson in the 1830s, at the moment Germantown saw its first railroads. His work took shape in the 1830s and 1840s, a period nationwide when “nostalgia and romanticization emerged as prominent patterns in literature and art.”¹⁹ Watson’s paradigm emphasized colonial history, conservative politics, and citizens actively involved in preserving the past. With Watson providing the example, Germantown’s memory infrastructure became an almost continual colonial revival, well before the term “Colonial Revival” was used to describe public memory in the 1870s.

The visit to Germantown of the Revolutionary War hero, the Marquis de Lafayette, on July 20-21, 1825 marked the beginning of public memory in Germantown. Lafayette’s return to Philadelphia sparked a widely held desire to remember the colonial and revolutionary past. As historian Gary Nash has described, “Lafayette brilliantly refocused attention on the virtue and heroism of the revolutionary generation in a way that kindled reverence for historic sites that could be transformed into sacred spaces.”²⁰ He was invited by Congress to return to the United States fifty years after the revolution had begun. He was afforded a triumphant pageant over a year and a half up and down the eastern seaboard. His trip took place when Americans were beginning to remember the nation’s past.²¹ Feted for seven days in Philadelphia in 1824, his arrival helped to make

the State House a national shrine (at his suggestion it henceforth became known as Independence Hall). His visit stimulated efforts to found one of the earliest collecting institutions, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in 1824 (of which Watson was an early director).²²

While the Marquis de Lafayette did not actually take part in the 1777 Battle of Germantown (he had been laid up with injuries sustained in the earlier battle at Brandywine), his visit stimulated historical imagination in Germantown. His visit made the American Revolution a unifying theme justifying the prominence of the township and its residents, who understood themselves as “ladies and gentlemen of respectability.”²³ Seen today, Lafayette’s reception offered a preview of the memory infrastructure built in Germantown thereafter. A grand breakfast reception was held for Lafayette in the parlor at Cliveden, the summer mansion of the Chew family and the pivotal site of the 1777 battle. For Lafayette’s visit, the house and grounds were open for people to see the blood marks and battle-scarred walls, the first time ever that the public was let in—marking the first time a house in Germantown was used as a museum. Several sites that had been involved in the battle were shown to Lafayette that day (most are now operated as house museums). The tour culminated in a reception for the “townspeople” at Wyck, the Germantown house of the Wistar-Haines family since 1690. At every stop, aging Continental Army veterans presented themselves, often in uniform, to the Marquis de

Lafayette.

At Wyck, Watson presented the Marquis de Lafayette with a curious box made from “materials consecrated to the memory of some of the earliest historical incidents of my country.”²⁴ Fashioned with wood from historically significant trees, such as an oak from Independence Hall, the box contained what was supposedly a lock of Washington’s hair and wood from the frigate *Alliance*, which had transported Lafayette back and forth across the Atlantic. These were relics, Watson explained, which offered the chance to connect with people for “by such association, such constituted minds are capable of generating the ideal presence, and to commune with men and things of other times.”²⁵ Such a collection—and Watson made several such boxes for different occasions—typified Watson’s (and the mid-nineteenth century) approach to history. While each of the items was of national importance, in Watson’s conception they also had special impact because of the local connections. As one historian has written, “Watson felt that the boxes presented to a sympathetic and contemplative mind remains calculated to impress the imagination with many grateful recollections of our primitive history.”²⁶ They were attempts to collect relics and fashion them in a way to connect them to periods and people greater than our selves. They were meant to convey a specified impression; their meaning had to be shaped.

It is important to examine the legacies of Watson’s paradigm, for they lay out

many of the practices, paradoxes, and troubles with how Germantown's public memory developed. They also suggest that the primacy of colonial history was not always as unifying or monolithic as some people thought. The fact is that there grew from Watson's paradigm the elements which would later cultivate a narrative to compete with the nostalgia for the colonial past.

The events surrounding Lafayette's visit offered the shape of things to come as far as presenting the past was concerned. Lafayette's carriage procession presaged the lavish parades and historical pageants down Germantown Avenue in 1908, 1933, and 1983 to celebrate the anniversaries related to the founding of Germantown. Each is its own text to understand the element of the community's sense of itself as presented to outsiders. The tour of the houses in Germantown modeled the typical tour of the house museums taken by tourists throughout the twentieth century and served as a tourism model to emulate and develop by urban planners in the 1960s. And Watson's approach, with a prefabricated display of artifacts connecting one to the founders and the revolutionary generation, preceded by 120 years the stage management of the plans to save Germantown by refashioning a market square in the 1950s or the Planning Commission's vision to relocate historic buildings into one compact district in the 1960s.

Watson was inspired by Lafayette's visit to place markers throughout Germantown in the 1830s and 1840s. He actively tried to preserve buildings in

Philadelphia and Germantown, creating a sense that the colonial-era buildings themselves were sacred and worth saving. Watson has been described both as “Philadelphia’s first preservationist” and “Germantown’s greatest historian.” He was a primary source collector—an early builder of the textual narrative of Germantown history by virtue of the collecting he did, the published accounts he wrote, and the efforts he made to preserve buildings and establish markers and monuments.²⁷ His collection of oral histories and contemporary accounts, in the *Annals of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania in Olden Times*, were the first efforts to collect and record the history of the founding period in Philadelphia. Watson worked in Germantown long before the development of professional academic history at university level or preservation on the local level.

And yet he used modern techniques of historical inquiry long before they became part of professional historiography. He developed and refined the questionnaire for collecting short answers to questions about people whose accounts he not only wanted to collect, but whose input he did not want to be lost. Watson also worked on relic collages, identified and placed grave markers at burying sites of Revolutionary War dead, crafted markers and monuments, amassed archives, took part in archeological digs (such as of Dock Creek in Philadelphia), conducted oral histories, and commissioned illustrations by artists of the places he described in his histories.

One of his last works before his death in 1860 was a brochure history of

Germantown for which he commissioned Frederick deBourg Richards to photograph buildings in Germantown that had stood during the American Revolution (the brochure could not find a publisher, but the images reside in the Library Company and the Germantown Historical Society). This was one of the earliest collections of photographs of buildings on the Avenue and remains a benchmark of the architectural history of Germantown. Watson's influence included the fact that Germantown never lacked for creativity or variety in approaches to preserving or presenting the past. It also meant, though, that the work of placing monuments and markers in honor of those who came before, photographing then-and-now comparisons, and providing ceremonial renderings of major events at every anniversary—complete with costumes and food—did so often with explicit reverence to Watson.²⁸ And since his concerns were entirely colonial and were shaped by his essentially conservative politics, this meant that these elements of the paradigm became part of the narrative emphasizing nostalgia.

Watson remains an important figure in Philadelphia and Germantown history because he did so much to record it and preserve it, and because he got so much wrong. The term “Watson's *Annals*” today is considered synonymous with a way of doing history from which professional historians have distanced themselves for generations. Scholars have taken Watson's work to task for its overt conservatism and lack of critical analysis. Susan Stabile, in her history of Watson's protégée, Deborah Logan, described

how Watson's "error-ridden, though widely-read, *Annals* perpetuated the heroic (and often inaccurate) myths of national memory."²⁹ Watson, for better or worse in Germantown, was the standard of the "citizen-historian" and until citizen historians gave way to professional curators and preservation professionals, Watson and his many imitators built a tradition of history that would persist for most of the twentieth century.

The founders of Germantown Site and Relic Society in 1900 reflected Watson's conservatism, steeped as they were in the blue blood of founding families, and limited their collecting and preservation impulses to associations with the Social Register. A majority of the founders were directly related to original founding families or even signers of the Declaration of Independence.³⁰ This led to what historian John Bodnar considered "associationism" which allowed for groups to establish their identity based on the past.³¹ Germantown's antiquarian citizen-historians exemplified this tendency well into the twentieth century, as colonial revival studies have shown.³² Descendants used the past to authenticate one's own experience, a tendency institutionalized in many of the museums established by the descendants, mainly because a house museum provided one of the few models for preserving the connections.³³ Making known their own historical associations in terms of their people allowed them to exclude ethnic minorities. As historian Michael Kammen has shown, to build a tradition, the past has to be used, and the way traditions are perceived and memory is used matter most in what gets passed

down.³⁴ In this way, the Germantowners were not all that different from other places concerned with preserving the past.³⁵

No museum has ever been built in Germantown—rather existing buildings (usually homes built well enough by the well-off to last) were converted into museums. Unlike Philadelphia, or other places like Williamsburg or Deerfield, where museums were designed and built for specific pedagogical purposes, the historic houses of Germantown were refashioned into museums that spoke to how the ancestors lived. The house museums were the carriers of tradition. With the opening of Stenton in 1900 and the museum of the Site and Relic Society 1901, Germantown began to add museums to the memory infrastructure. The house museum has been a lasting model and one which the historic community in Germantown has seen as critical to the memory infrastructure.

The historic houses, societies, and sites established according the paradigm, therefore, served increasingly as bastions against the community, standing for an ideal world long ago. Rather than being static places of conservation, the house museums are best understood as dynamic examples of the relationship of people to their social, cultural and political contexts.³⁶ Philadelphia historian Morris Vogel described how, in terms of American history, preserving houses that were somehow connected to it was the primary way of presenting the past—by sealing off from the present the history the houses contained. As Vogel argued, the public presentations of the houses were a statement

against the present and a statement for the moral superiority of the past.³⁷ When, after World War I and during the Great Depression, the country found itself in the throes of a second Colonial Revival, there grew an even greater sense of history and illusion of permanence to a country that needed both.³⁸ Because Germantown's history is told mostly in its house museums, the degree to which they have kept the past away from the present is an especially important tension within the community.

Among the paradoxes the Watson paradigm revealed, however, was the dichotomy of trying to conserve the past in a city section that was changing. Historians Randall Mason and Max Page have argued that there were indeed competing narratives in historic preservation, much as occurred in Germantown. The curatorial aspect of keeping public memory worked against the urbanist sense of managing a contemporary context.³⁹ For Germantown, because of the Watson paradigm, the impulse to the curatorial aspect of preservation frequently overrode the urbanist component of building the past into the existing context. The memory infrastructure of Germantown, because of the elites looking backward with their efforts at preservation, was at once limited to the colonial and revolutionary period and inflexible to a contemporary narrative of progress. In the course of the twentieth century, however, newer residents grew interested in Germantown history, making it prone to reflect changes to the community, even if the infrastructure did not come to reflect the changes occurring in the neighborhood.

Using Watson's paradigm meant that history could be both nostalgically bitter, but in the hands of private citizens, also hopeful and fresh. Having private citizens be the carriers of tradition led to a wider array of historical narratives than only the one espoused by Watson. On the one hand this meant figures who brought enthusiasm to their study of the past, people who were pivotal to how the Site and Relic Society brought the memory infrastructure forward. Among the founders of the Society was Cornelius Weygandt, professor of English at University of Pennsylvania. Weygandt's son became a popular memoirist, with a long-running column in the Philadelphia *Public Ledger* in the early 1920s and 1930s, and published several books on growing up in Germantown. Though trained in medicine, Dr. Alfred C. Lambdin was an influential newspaper editor and a professional molder of opinion for the Germantown *Chronicle* and later the Philadelphia *Evening Chronicle* and *Public Ledger*.⁴⁰ Alfred was considered "widely influential," due to his comprehensive history of the battle of Germantown, which was read at its centennial in 1877, which his obituary recounted in 1911 as "still regarded as one of the best accounts of the battle every written."⁴¹ The article appeared in the first edition of the Philadelphia's signature publication of historical scholarship, the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* (an edition which saw mostly a collection of addresses on historical subjects). The editors made it a point to notate where Lambdin did not reconcile differences among the sources and among other

writers—something which a trained historian would know to do, but a medical doctor might not.⁴² These men provided history-making along the Watson model—that of people of independent means, most of colonial lineage and of the Protestant Establishment of Philadelphia—connecting the history to the founders.

Women also took on the role of citizen preservationists. Given the large number of women's groups who turned to preserving houses, installing markers, or collecting and maintaining archives, the women both promoted a private version—the intimate connection to how the founders lived—alongside a justification for their own heritage. One of the earliest models of American house museums, the 1853 saving of George Washington's home, Mount Vernon, has also been its most enduring. On the model of the Mt. Vernon Ladies Association, house museums have been a significant way for women to wield influence in the practice of American history, particularly as descendants and hereditary groups stepped in to save structures of national importance, such as the Dames and Daughters of the American Revolution.⁴³ Many of the early historians of the Site and Relic Society were women. Most of the early groups running the houses as museums of Germantown were descendent groups like the Colonial Dames, or from wealthy families, like Frances Wister, who founded the Philadelphia Society for the Preservation, or Mary Chew, who worked with the Colonial Dames in addition to maintaining her own historic site, Cliveden. Their work served to authenticate their own

work as well as their ancestors.

Chew's work was also involved with the preservation of Independence Hall. Even that landmark of American memory was often fractured by conflict between elements of heritage. As Charlene Mires' history of Independence Hall showed, the most enduring tension of preserving that building was that conflict between local and national sense of the importance of the building.⁴⁴ This became a factor evident in the private and public tensions surrounding Chew's home, Cliveden, in 1901. In the memory infrastructure of Germantown tension between local and national would continually find ways into the preservation of the built environment—with the private and parochial winning out far more than a shared version.

The citizen historians also expanded the history to be considered to include ethnic history. In anticipation of the anniversaries of William Penn's charter in 1701, the battle in 1737, and the founding of Germantown 1708, studies of the German founders in Germantown were common, containing ever more detailed descriptions of the historic architecture from the earliest periods that was still standing. Samuel Pennypacker provided a history of German influence in Germantown, establishing its eighteenth and nineteenth century roots deeper than ever—at the very moment that Germans' influence in Germantown was not really much in evidence.⁴⁵ This was natural, given the ethnic diversity of Germantown. It did not, however, correspond to Watson's approach to

ethnic minorities.

Watson’s glaring insensitivity to black Philadelphians was another element of his paradigm put forth by Germantown’s traditional antiquarian historians, with lingering results. With other antiquarians Watson formed the elitist approach to the perpetuation of myths within Philadelphia history to the exclusion of accounts of the history of minorities and outsiders, defined as anyone who did not have the connections to Washington, Lafayette, or the founders.⁴⁶ A few examples from Watson’s *Annals* will suffice to reflect Watson’s politics. His section entitled “Negroes and Slaves” described black Philadelphians by saying, “thirty or forty years ago they were much humbler.”⁴⁷ And he hoped that his work would aid the spreading of Anglo-Saxon ideals: “I have sometimes said and still oftener thought that my *Annals* should afford interest abroad—even in Europe, showing the early domestic and homebred history of our Anglo-Saxon race.”⁴⁸ To record the past inclusively and reverently, while trying to keep the present at a distance, was a dual legacy of his work with implications for the Germantown paradigm for history. This seems ironic, given the diversity of population that marked Germantown from its earliest days of many different religions, ethnic groups, and classes.

How other groups attempted to exercise their interest in the past is covered frequently here, for as Mike Wallace showed in his history of preservation, often fragile coalitions of groups in and out of the official history came together over issues that

threatened the community's sense of the past.⁴⁹ Such an example was the star-studded Negro Achievement Week, which brought together different groups in 1928, but was never repeated. While these coalitions were fragile in Germantown, and usually short-lived or project-based, they suggest that there were times when the community articulated a desire for a shared history, or at least a competing narrative other than a tacit acceptance of official history.

An irony for Watson's approach was that the citizen historian model meant that immigrants and migrant blacks could also readily pick up what was interesting about Germantown's rich history. Furthermore, the element of the paradigm that emphasized citizen-historians meant that such newcomers were perfectly capable of applying their own interpretations to the history of Germantown. They also began to reveal that the colonial version of the past was not monolithic. In 1913, J. Gordon Baugh celebrated the African American community in Germantown, not by honoring the founders, but by honoring the work of the black community in establishing itself in the fifty years since the Emancipation Proclamation. As will be shown in Chapter Two, its tone was one of hope, not decline. Edward Hocker's 1933 history of Germantown mined the newspaper accounts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for a history of everything from the battle to the records of churches, social institutions and clubs, showing how many different groups and clubs there were for each section of the neighborhood's population.

Thomas E. Clemens wrote pamphlet histories of East Germantown, an oft-neglected section in the community's history, a mostly anecdotal recounting of buildings and landmarks still standing. Clemens' section of the community had the largest working class population and a wealth of nativist organizations promoting their own heritage, such as the Junior Order of United American Mechanics and the Patriotic Sons of America.⁵⁰ These citizen histories fit the Watson model. They did so, however, in ways that reflected the separateness of the community. And by emphasizing progress for their respective peoples or sections of town, they embraced change that was occurring in the township. They celebrated it.

This celebratory element of the tradition would take many forms in the early twentieth century. Whether in histories of certain sections of town or sections of the population or connections to the famous, though, the focus was that by describing the buildings and the connections to the founders, they were bringing a heritage-based civic boosterism to bolster the argument that Germantown mattered. The process became a revealing flipside to melancholy about the changes occurring and could be found often in Germantown's many civic heritage festivals.

For Germantown, the civic festival has been a crucial text for how the community celebrated the past. The festivals provided important evidence of how the widespread the past was considered and will be studied closely here. Even in its festivals, the historic

houses were essential to promoting Germantown's past. As Germantown gloried in the revolutionary and colonial past, its school teams were named for Cliveden while ads in newspapers and real estate promotions sold the neighborhood on the basis of its colonial history. In the 1908 Founders Day parade, for instance, large scale models of the historic houses from the time of the revolution were showcased on floats moving down Germantown Avenue in front of throngs of people.

In addition to the nostalgic commemoration, however, the festivals also celebrated the narrative of progress, particularly among ethnic groups. In other words, the festivals also revealed the fragmentation of the many groups in Germantown. As shown by historians Susan G. Davis, who studied the nineteenth century, and David Glassberg, who studied the twentieth, community or street festivals were widespread examples of public presentations of the past.⁵¹ Ethnic and patriotic groups would trumpet their group identity in the nineteenth century, making the streets themselves a contested place for various ethnic groups' parades, such as St. Patrick's Day or Steuben Day. Glassberg's study showed that history pageants were a highly popular form of public history, involving even academic historians in the parades. Philadelphia saw many such pageants, as did Germantown. W.E.B. DuBois would mount such a pageant for African-Americans in 1915, bringing it to New York, Washington and Philadelphia. The pageants sought to unify the country with a vision of progress, and they played down

conflicts in the past or present, so slavery would not be stressed, for instance, but the ability of humankind to overcome obstacles would.

Germantown's tradition of festivals showed they have played down conflict, but there certainly was competition among groups putting them on. Frequently there would be more than one festival to showcase an anniversary, such as in 1933 when German-Americans celebrated Germantown's founding one day in October and the Germantown Historical Society celebrated the same event a few days later. For Germantown, the tensions of public presentation of an anniversary revealed competing narratives about the past and present, and would result not in one shared event, but more often in several separate versions.

Such celebrations about progress or by newcomers posed a competing narrative to Watson's melancholic approach to the past. "Germantown now is no longer Germantown as it was. It goes on building many a cottage for city businessmen."⁵² Written by Watson in 1856, this lament frequently echoed in the late 1890s and early 1900s, and throughout the century, not simply because people shared the sentiment, but because it embodied how the literally conservative, nostalgic impulse behind historic preservation was running into the dynamic changes in the neighborhood, the city, and the nation. The final version of his *Annals* overflowed impending loss, reading like a litany of complaint, reflecting the bitterness that comes with nostalgia. As Nash has written,

Watson “loathed the forces unleashed by immigration, industrialization, and democratization.”⁵³ Philadelphia in the 1840s and 1850s was a hotbed of anti-immigrant and nativist fervor, including riots against immigrants and burning of churches. It would remain highly segmented throughout its development into the twentieth century.

Watson’s nostalgic conception of a historical society and how it could spread the values of genteel culture and impart a sense of identity among Philadelphians would be served by curators like him and those who followed his example.

This meant that history according to Watson’s paradigm served the cause of division. As much as the public memory brought about many competing impulses, the fact is that Germantown, like Philadelphia, was extremely divided. This was true of the large mix of ethnic groups in Germantown which competed to show their American heritage in ways which separated them from other ethnic groups. Racial divisions fundamentally fractured the city’s working class, thereby undermining efforts to construct effective coalitions in the twentieth century, such as during the New Deal.⁵⁴

While some of this was the power and tradition of ethnic groups keeping together, it also reflected political realities of the twentieth century that produced locally grown movements to garner political power.⁵⁵ Segregation in Philadelphia was deeply rooted, with occasional race riots or other public conflicts. Germantown’s many organizations included extremely bigoted ones—leading to the establishment of separate spheres in all

walks of life, educational, social, and religious.⁵⁶ The fact is, the periods of reform in Philadelphia, when they took place, such as in the early 1900s and the 1950s, attempted to bring groups together to establish harmony, so great was the tendency toward division.⁵⁷ The separateness and divisions in the social and political life continued to generate more in-fighting, rather than less, as the city's neighborhoods declined. This made the discontented voices more prone to extreme views and hostility to working together, which produced not only strikes and riots in Philadelphia, but nationwide, and stiffened each succeeding generations' intent on reinforcing divisions.

The social stratification could be seen in the built environment. There are worker houses, for example, and many separate schools, churches and clubs for Italians and blacks, some with deep histories dating back to the eighteenth century. While historians like Delores Hayden have explored how this diversity of the built environment nourishes individuals in it with the power of authentic manifestations of diversity, this was not the case in Germantown.⁵⁸ The competing narratives and lack of shared history meant that the built environment became a reminder of the separations and barriers to overcoming them. The memory infrastructure was so inflexible, that it had no room to explain how evidence in its built environment could provide context for the minority community, for example, as with its "separate but equal" school built after Plessy v. Ferguson in 1896, the 1901 Meehan School.

Germantown never became rich enough to tear down all of the past; though economic development did compete with the past enough in plenty of instances which removed what was old, if not necessarily nationally historic. Industry and eventually large department stores moved out, and what was left were often ruins. Likewise, there were no newly rich industrialists who wanted to put their stamp on Germantown the way Henry Ford did in Deerfield or the Rockefellers did in Williamsburg. The promise of these models, particularly the Rockefellers, held out the promise to Germantown's leaders that it could use nostalgic history as the engine for the community's well being. Beginning in the 1940s, Germantown even attempted to create a "miniature Williamsburg," which was transformed into a major urban renewal project in the 1960s under Edmund Bacon and the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority.

Professionals and Leadership in Germantown's Twentieth Century History

Two competing narratives would therefore develop in the twentieth century regarding Germantown, one stemmed from descendants emphasizing nostalgia and decline, while another offered by newcomers and immigrants emphasized hope and progress. A third group, professionals, began to enter the picture early in the century and offered its own version of the narrative strands. Professionals of many stripes approached Germantown project by project, but often with leadership in terms of

specifically defined goals or distinct segments of the community.

Over the course of the century many creative and talented people came to live or work in Germantown. First, architectural professionals pushed the antiquarian and amateur historians to think scientifically about preserving the past beginning in the 1930s. Social service administrators stressed greater cooperation among groups in the 1920s and 1930s. This was followed by professional urban planners in the 1950s building a vision of the neighborhood's modernization. That decade also brought along professional community organizers who managed the community's transformed demographic. Finally, beginning in the 1950s and 1960s and taking full effect in the 1970s and 1980s, professional historians and museum experts brought broader skills to the conservation and presentation of the historic collections and buildings of Germantown. The professionals were in effect agents to manage the change in the neighborhood and adapt it for modernity. In some cases the professionals stressed outreach and collaboration among the disparate groups, in others they encouraged burrowing into deeper, not broader, approaches to history without making connections across boundaries.

Not all those who came into contact with history provided leadership for the whole community. Usually the leadership provided by professionals could not counteract the separate strands or push for a distinct approach to the exclusion of working with

others. Sometimes leadership planned a grand vision but the process it employed to realize the vision repelled support or denied compromise, things that could have overcome the separateness and applied forward momentum to counteract the melancholy. It led to a catch-22 that meant leaders only acted locally, even though there were national implications. As Contosta wrote of Germantown's leadership in the century, "By emphasizing private or largely local measures, the leaders often failed to understand that most problems in the urban, industrial age were regional, national, and even international in scope."⁵⁹ This dilemma became reflected in the neighborhood's local approaches to national history.

As more professional skills could be applied, the greater the chance that outreach and compromise could be brought to bear, and in many cases professionals helped to stimulate the creativity and progress related to history that each decade witnessed. In some cases fleeting coalitions formed, but could not be sustained, or were limited by working project by project, such as with 1928's Negro Achievement Week or the opposition to the urban renewal plans in the 1960s. In other instances, the leadership applied to only to one group, such as when David Richardson, led the 1967 Germantown High School protest, and was later able to bring together disparate groups within the African-American community to achieve electoral success in 1972 after years of educational reform agitation. In such cases, success was defined more narrowly than the

good of the whole neighborhood or an approach that could be sustainable. Either way, leadership in Germantown rarely amounted to providing comprehensive approaches for all the citizens of the neighborhood—Germantown’s size, diversity, and traditions of independent separatism were simply too entrenched.

Professionalization reached the history field very late, when compared to, say, the sciences. In other parts of the city, museums were built to understand the past and its sacred artifacts. Historian Steven Conn has shown that there was more training in the university-affiliated natural science museums or even the institutes which applied training, much more so than museums devoted to history.⁶⁰ But Germantown had no corollary. Even though the period of Conn’s study, 1876 to 1926, was a rich period for Germantown’s historic community, full of anniversaries, commemorative efforts and monument-building (as well as the start of the Site and Relic Society), the efforts remained in the hands of citizen historians. The fact that there has never been a museum built in Germantown indicates that the historical tradition being applied was based on a thinner intellectual framework and not one so deep that it was touching upon other fields such as science.

Meanwhile, there was no university connection or sponsor for Germantown, as there had been for the University of Pennsylvania’s Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, or academy for expert training, as with the Academy of Natural Sciences.

Some of this is explained by the lag in historical consciousness in the nation as a whole, for development of the historical profession lagged behind the sciences during this period.⁶¹ The established, descendent-based narrative for Germantown was therefore not open to broadened interpretations or wider contexts to examine the past. For example, the history of slavery was whisked away from historic sites, such as Cliveden, until very late in the twentieth century.⁶² The makers of the tradition, or what Conn called the “knowledge builders” regarding historic preservation, were not specifically trained to do so until the 1960s and 1970s.⁶³ This fact served to prevent the history from expanding beyond celebrating tradition to the practice of critical analysis.

The paradigm of private citizens involved in history made it hard for professionalization to take hold in Germantown. It was hard enough for history museums to adapt to new scholarship and interpretation, such as for Colonial Williamsburg, Inc.⁶⁴ New patterns of historical inquiry were not easily realized in a modern history museum if the intelligentsia was not engaged enough to pursue its new approaches to the front line, where history meets the tourist visitor; or if there is not a tacit acknowledgement of the primacy of the commercial aspects of the enterprise, of the lengths to which the corporation has to go to protect its image.⁶⁵ Ultimately, structural elements precluded Williamsburg from creating a “community of memory.” A community of memory, as shown in the case of Williamsburg, is a group of individuals who “agree that they share

some kind of cultural heritage, and they talk about that heritage in ways that celebrate what is good in it but criticize what is not.”⁶⁶ Germantown has been a neighborhood run by descendants, volunteers, and business leaders that has found a community of memory that was more celebratory than critical, at least until more professional leadership worked its way into the control of the memory infrastructure beginning in the 1970s.

The neighborhood context is, of course, very different from a museum—it cannot be sealed off for analysis the way artifacts are studied in a museum. The professional ethic in Germantown that did produce a shared sense of the past and a community celebratory yet critical had to come from somewhere other than the historic community. Such examples, such as at the YWCA in the 1920s, were driven by national administrators, not local approaches. It produced the kind of self-examination that would not be found in history groups until more professional approaches stressed collaboration and outreach in the 1980s.⁶⁷ And after the battles in Germantown over urban renewal plans put the established historical community on the losing side, leadership over the memory infrastructure gradually gave way to the growing number of professionals coming to work at the historic sites. National preservationist groups such as the National Park Service and the National Trust for Historic Preservation entered Germantown along with regional ones like the Society for the Preservation of Landmarks (testifying to the richness of the curatorial treasures). This brought greater professional leadership, but

also added new organizations to the overpopulated mix of organizations.

House museums and their overseeing organizations tended to be slower than other institutions in responding to change. And it may actually be too late that the house museums of Germantown can provide leadership toward a shared history, given that its chief model of presenting the community is its wealth of historic houses. However, during the later twentieth century, the Mt. Vernon model of opening a house for tours to selected individuals has proven hard to sustain. After decades of declining attendance, one Germantown house museum, Upsala, merged with another, Cliveden.⁶⁸ To counter the perception that house museums were elitist and needed to emphasize reaching out to broader audiences, the National Trust for Historic Preservation began using the term “historic sites” to describe its collection of houses it administered.⁶⁹ Whether that term speaks more invitingly to the public than “house museum” is still to be played out, as house museums across the country have been considering alternatives to traditional models.⁷⁰

For Germantown, the response has meant greater educational programming and active engagement with the community through outreach and public use of the house museum. The historic house museums, including the Germantown Historical Society, now maintain the memory infrastructure, with the sites standing as symbols of the community of memory attempting to offer multiple stories that the sites can tell, simply

by having witnessed the change in the community over so long.

Such an evolution of house museums and historic sites reveals that the memory infrastructure, if properly coordinated, can be the entire built environment of the neighborhood. The house museums represented the fragmented history of the neighborhood, yet even they would evolve and reflect how the process of history could be rewritten. The buildings provided a sense of stability and of history's relevance to Germantown, and they also became the places where changes in thinking about history, preservation, urban planning, and civic identity are most evident. The degree to which historic Germantown could adapt enough to become a community of memory mirrored the larger practice of public history as it has grown as a field during the twentieth century. The neighborhood's practice of history provides another way that it is connected to how the nation understands its past.

Partially as a result of the efforts conducted according to Watson's paradigm, a visitor today can see many of the same historic buildings that were around in the 1700s. The uniquely Germantown stone buildings line Germantown Avenue as they have for centuries, many of them with markers or open hours to display their historic importance to the community and the nation, but more specifically they testify to the neighborhood's heritage as embodied by the antiquarians. Given the downturns in Germantown's economic fortunes beginning around the 1930s, the presence of so many reminders of

centuries-old past remains a testament to another important paradox, namely that of a citizenry interested in preserving the past together with a lack of development to destroy it. The historical community in 1900 began to save what was important to it, the colonial and revolutionary past, which served to justify the elite social status of many members of the community. The emphasis on Colonial Revival would keep this narrative of preservation work alive for far too long in Germantown, defining what was historic about Germantown in severely limited terms, and the established historical community as comprised in 1900 would remain similarly constituted through the 1960s.

The Germantown Problem

How historic preservation has taken effect in older neighborhoods and city sections has been the subject of writers since the 1960s. In an essay in 1971, Michael deHaven Newsome described how historic preservation had pushed residents out of a neighborhood in Washington D.C. who were the descendants of people who built it. In what amounted to an early critique of gentrification, Newsome labeled the situation the “Georgetown problem.”⁷¹ The problem stemmed from difficulties in how to involve disparate segments of a community when historic preservation was concerned—and how not all people would see the issue the same way. In several cases in Georgetown, he described how large segments of the community were more threatened by preservation

than the buildings that were being preserved. His solution suggested that if lots of time and opportunity could be used to bring marginalized groups into the process of planning for historic preservation and whatever development it might bring, solutions could be found that would not force anyone away. He described how it would take effort to bring about a shared sense of commitment to using history to move a place forward. For older neighborhoods in American cities, the issues of how to preserve a sense of place rooted in the past as the neighborhoods change over generations does not lend itself to easy solutions.⁷² Germantown is one such neighborhood, but with important distinctions.

Germantown has been trying to use history for economic gain for a long time. Gentrification, however, has not been the problem for Germantown. As discussed, Germantown experienced significant economic and population decline after World War II. Much of the neighborhood's history has been preserved, but only staggered improvement can be seen in terms of job creation, shops and amenities for tourists, or even coordinated tours among the many history museums. That the community preserved much of its history while other features of the neighborhood have decayed around it makes it different from Georgetown or other communities where the issues have simply involved questions of economic redevelopment. That Germantown's history was seen as key to its revival posits issues of identity and ownership in a different light from other neighborhoods coping with gentrification.

Institutional, systemic and cultural factors have given Germantown history its shape, and they produced a variation of Newsom's formulation of what happened in Washington D.C.—the factors formed a “Germantown problem.” The Germantown Problem shows how one cannot seal off a neighborhood from the rest of the world in an attempt to forestall change or exalt the sacred. When too many groups use the past to contest issues in the present to the detriment of the overall good, even when the groups have similar interests and common goals, the result is the Germantown Problem.

Jane Jacobs was another writer familiar with the issues of preservation in older cities, notably her Greenwich Village section of New York, but eventually her work examined many cities.⁷³ She wrote extensively about how urban renewal projects of the 1950s and 1960s posed grave threats to neighborhoods, which to Jacobs was not merely the loss of the historic architecture, but the loss of the networks that neighborhoods sustained, the relationships of human activities both formal and informal that occurred on city streets. Demolition and development shattered social networks and healthy urban communities, denying human need for historical connectedness. The urban planners and visionary architects that proposed the urban renewal projects, according to Jacobs, rarely took the fact of enmeshed interaction of city life into account.⁷⁴

In Germantown, the problem Jacobs would likely have noticed would have been the overabundance of historic resources, architecture, parks, clubs and activities going on

in diverse neighborhoods—so many quality of life factors with little connectedness or overall coherence. Narratives that decried the changes of the present competed with those that celebrated change, while there were few opportunities to resolve the differences. The Germantown Problem was that there was so much life, but it was lived in so many isolated networks that did not interact nearly enough. The Germantown Problem ensured that the community's very strengths, its history and its diversity, provided in one neighborhood the kinds of heartbreak Jacobs saw played out in America's largest cities.⁷⁵ For a city is not a museum; what happens to a city's neighborhoods reflects the larger issues facing the city, no matter how many efforts are made to set the neighborhood apart.

The factors that make up the Germantown Problem have been the institutional, systemic, and cultural ways that the community managed its two great constants over centuries: continual change and its sense of independent identity. Institutionally, Germantown has been marked for the entire century by too many organizations. As mentioned earlier, the overabundance of organizations includes churches along Germantown Avenue at a rate of 11 per mile. The presence of so many organizations has typified the entire twentieth century, and led to a chorus of complaints from business leaders and newspaper editors as early as the 1920s.

The systemic elements of the Germantown Problem grew from the sectionalism

inherent in the way Philadelphia consolidated long-standing and independent towns and neighborhoods in 1854. The independent streak alarmed the mayor of Philadelphia in the 1920s, who came to Germantown to preach against sectionalism at a time when the city was characterized by historian James Wolfinger as “Philadelphia Divided.” Germantown never lost its sense of independence. On the contrary, as incredible as it may seem, Germantown had its own Town Hall, the saga of which will be described in Chapter Two. The building became a major emblem of the Germantown problem, typifying its sense of independence in 1925, over seven decades after it had become part of the city. It was proclaimed that Germantown was the fifth largest city in Pennsylvania on the occasion, able to stand on its own, according to its prominent citizens. This sectionalism at the heart of the Philadelphia system proved difficult for Germantown.

Moreover, within Germantown the sense of independent identity filtered into the many cultural and religious institutions, each maintaining its own traditions and methods, often to the point of stubborn refusal to adapt. The social structure of the community encouraged multiple groups and organizations. A perpetual state of “separateness” characterized Germantown and it has been reflected in the built environment, as well as the community’s approach to history. It produced continual tensions that often were reflected in thinking about history, since the past became a way to establish one’s identity amid so many competing groups.

An example of how this worked was a notable paradox. While local Quakers took great pride in the 1688 protest against slavery and a reputation for a prominent role in abolition, the Germantown Quaker Meeting did not allow blacks to worship there until 1947.⁷⁶ Whether in neighborhoods, civic groups, churches, politics or historic house museums, the century produced a splintered sense of community that was largely a choice made by its citizens. As one organization after another broke off rather than compromise with a larger vision, the self-interests of groups led to exclusion, often in direct response to being excluded. And this is reflected in the built environment and in what was preserved.

Socially and residentially Germantown was segregated, but not entirely. Some streets saw blacks and whites living at opposite ends of the same block. Religious groups made up the majority of organizations and people identified strongly with their churches and parishes, thus segregation led to parallel versions of faith communities, such as the St. Catherine Mission (for blacks) of St. Vincent Parish (mostly Irish) in 1914. Among the score of ethnic heritage groups were groups such as the Sons of the Revolution, the Venetian Club or the Order of Hibernia.

The persistence of the KKK klavern in Germantown between the 1920s and World War II is both an affront to the twenty first-century sensibility and yet, paradoxically, what lies at the heart of the Germantown Problem. For at the very same

time, a progressive YWCA pushed for dynamic programs that challenged segregating tendencies, often with bold public history programs. There were many other examples of the paradox of Germantown's separated social structure. While Quakers helped produce liberal education and integration initiatives and supported social services for minorities and under-served populations, the local established Quaker meeting did not allow blacks until 1947. The *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court decision of 1896 prompted construction of a blacks-only elementary school, the Thomas Meehan School in 1901. There was a white retail district on Germantown Avenue and a black retail district a few blocks over. Germantown High School was integrated from its opening in 1915, but black students were strongly advised to take only commercial courses. In 1967 black students openly rebelled against school policies, notably regarding the lack of teaching black history.

The black community itself comprised multiple isolated pockets of black-owned or operated businesses, not well connected to one another. Class and geographic distinctions prevented many migrant blacks from being accepted along with the established African Americans in town in the early 1920s. The locals complained about too many civic and community organizations in the 1920s and the natural tendency seemed to be to create yet another, or form new umbrella groups to attempt to coordinate them without lasting success. Partly the result of a Quaker community tradition to

emphasize consensus, Germantown was made more susceptible to plurality than to compromise, but even non-Quakers had to admit that the course of the century saw the number of organizations and congregations growing, not becoming more coordinated.

For communities that have pockets of diverse populations, this is not uncommon. Both constants of Germantown, continual mobility of its population diversity and a sense of itself as apart from the rest of the region, however, have also been sources of inherent weakness. The possibility of change brought a continual sense of dread or a competing sense of promise.

The cultural reasons for the Germantown problem involve the way that coping with change infused the community with a sacred reverence for the past that approached deep-seeded and openly-expressed melancholy. Because change was constant, each new wave of newcomers produced a corresponding group laying claim to the idea that Germantown's best days were behind it. Beginning with the arrival of the railroad in 1832, and accelerated by incorporation with Philadelphia in 1854, observers with a sense of the past claimed that "tornados of change" were fast approaching. Not that nostalgia has been unique to Germantown, of course. The papers in Amy Levin's recent study of local history has shown how nostalgia was itself an epistemology, a way of knowing that informed the establishment of museums out of reverence for the past.⁷⁷ Nostalgia is frequently a motivating factor for many local museums. But something deeper than a

sense of nostalgia was at work in Germantown.

That something deeper was a sense of melancholy. A saying that has made the rounds since the 1990s, attributed to one of Germantown's political representatives, was that "Places like Germantown don't die, but they are always dying."⁷⁸ The question of what constitutes "places like Germantown" lies at the heart of this study. This sense of melancholy has pervaded Germantown's public discourse, from art and literature to its approach to the built environment. As will be discussed, the melancholy exhibited in Benton Spruance's 1935 painting, *A Visitor to Germantown*, with a skeleton in the doorway of a historic building on Germantown Avenue, has long been evident.

Moreover it had been there from the outset of Germantown's public memory: when Watson helped set up markers and preserve buildings, it was because he feared the world was forever changing for the worse. If Watson's model was the paradigm for the colonial version of the past, so was his sense of melancholy. When Watson's model was brought into the twentieth century, the sense of foreboding persisted. As the community suffered through economic downturns, exodus of its manufacturing base, loss of its retail sector, and white flight, this refrain took many forms. Some artists even found beauty in its decay, but generally the sense of loss informed a sense that Germantown's grandest days were behind it. This led to a lack of realism about what could be accomplished and produced a longing for any kind of benefactor to save the neighborhood—an "if only"

approach to planning for growth or financial support. As we will see in subsequent chapters, when a savior failed to materialize—whether it was the rejection of Germantown as the nation’s capital, the Rockefellers, other private foundations, one of the elite families of the neighborhood, the investment programs of the federal government, or the enfranchisement of the black majority in the 1970s—citizens were left to grasp for the elements of identity that could be tangibly held, such as the house museums and places of their own traditions and heritage.

Meanwhile, Germantown’s early founding and the continual diversity of people passing through it meant a broader sweep of people who were invested in what happened once upon a time in Germantown. Being such an old community, Germantown also became nostalgic earlier, so that melancholic nostalgia became a habit honed to the point of ritual. The ways that colonial memorializing took shape in the nineteenth century then became models for pageants and festivals of public memory in the twentieth—such as Lafayette’s 1825 tour or the house-by-house guidebooks to what was left of the neighborhood’s past becoming mainstays of Germantown historiography ever after.

Because it was one of America’s earliest settlements, people all over the country identify some connection with Germantown. The neighborhood’s burying grounds include ancestors of some of the nation’s oldest families. People from all over the country who visit Germantown and identify connections to its history, sometimes

personal connections, however, do so in ways that idealize the past, making heroes out of any one historic. When a visitor from North Dakota today researches ancestors in Germantown but wonders why there is a chasm between the past and what the neighborhood looks like now; or when German visitors came to Germantown in 1983 only to be shocked that it was not a quaint village, this personalization can intensify the sense of decline, making the melancholy something deeper and more personal, strengthening the trend that creates a separate, subjective connection with the sense of place. And since so many different people came through Germantown, each generation refuels this wave of longing for the Germantown of one's ancestors.

The civic festivals that the community staged to celebrate heritage in Germantown continued to provide evidence that it remained a resilient and productive community throughout the century. The festivals themselves offer a way to understand the century at various times—but the pattern of separate histories remained evident throughout.

The power of place itself proved less unifying than hoped due to the many dichotomies and paradoxes at work. The Germantown Problem results in a diluted sense of shared history, no matter how authentic, or well preserved. Ultimately the community was unable to use its rich history to address contemporary issues. Germantown had to compete with the desire to preserve and seal off its history from the changing world (a

curatorial strand of preservation) while also coping with a large, dynamic neighborhood in a major American city. As the neighborhood grew and changed, history itself became a reason for separateness by establishing a distinctive identity and excluding other newcomers from it, particularly when selected groups used specific episodes of history by diminishing other aspects of history—limiting the potential of a shared past. The memory infrastructure marked specifically colonial events. It was not significantly adapted until the 1980s, so not all members of the community saw themselves in the past that was presented. While it may surprise twentieth century readers, the Germantown historical society did not except blacks as members until the early 1970s, but it was by no means the only exclusive club, so it was not shocking in Germantown. Germantown had many different clubs, organizations, and churches and each of them saw an aspect of the past that allowed them to cope with the changes of the present. And the answer to one group's disconnectedness from the larger theme of history as presented was to create a new museum, another historic site, or an alternative organization to tell its story that had been left untold. It was not only written history that generated subjective responses, but also public history and its preservation. And this makes the Germantown Problem important to understand for public historians and preservationists working today, so that the dichotomies can be bridged and a shared sense of the past can be put to use.

This dissertation will explore the history of Germantown's twentieth century, but it really explores the Germantown Problem. It is divided into this introduction to Germantown, followed by four roughly equal periods chronicling Germantown's twentieth century. It looks at historiography, organizational histories, and civic celebrations to see how the current memory infrastructure was established. The memory infrastructure initially employed the Watson paradigm of the primacy of the colonial heritage, conservative politics, and citizen involvement in the work of preservation. The paradigm gradually changed as professionalism, research, and new paradigms for historic preservation began to materialize in Germantown. Because thinking about history was not solely an academic exercise in Germantown, it was carried out by volunteers, citizens, and interested parties, as well as architects, archivists, and planners. The study also examines memoirs, news accounts, numerous plans, and publications—the sources where much of the rest of the world crossed paths with history. As the lead preservation organization, the Germantown Historical Society (as the Site and Relic Society was called after 1927) plays a lead role in the story. While it can be seen as an antiquarian organization that gradually fades from the scene as the world changed around it, in fact it continues to persist through each section of the study, providing historical records of the evolving approach to historic content, interpretation, and preservation through often creative approaches that presaged community development ideas long

before they became fashionable. Though itself a major factor in how history was channeled in the community, the Society also reflected many such efforts by groups and individuals whose work provides source material to examine how the field of public history has come to be.

The study proceeds more or less chronologically, beginning with this chapter on the first quarter century in Germantown when the traditional antiquarian historiography was brought into the new century to establish a memory infrastructure for the community.

Chapter Two examines how several competing strands of history were at work in the community, as shown by several of the players who made decisions regarding what mattered in Germantown, as well as those things and groups which did not.

Chapter Three explores how the memory infrastructure did not begin to reflect the diverse community that Germantown came to be in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. The separate strands took form in separate festivals indicating multiple groups who all saw great power in Germantown history. The upheavals of Depression and World War II were disruptive enough to the social economy in Germantown, but the many different groups in the community saw something in Germantown's history that helped authenticate their respective existence, and not all of it was in the memory infrastructure. The divisions within the community made for an identity crisis during the middle part of the century reflected in its festivals, plans, and decisions related to the public memory of

Germantown; the history of Germantown meant many different things to the many different groups whose stories were not always told in the community's history.

Chapter Four examines the attempts to re-shape Germantown by some of the separate groups, as the neighborhood struggled with a lack of coordination among civic historic, and economic interests, severe economic shifts and population loss. In its place were proposed different visions for Germantown, in keeping with different government approaches to cities, and different methods of coordinating a disparate community coping with Germantown's downward spin. Plans were ultimately rejected by a coalition of forces within the community, many of which came from a different power bases well outside what had been the traditional antiquarian approach to history.

The final chapter examines how professionals and voices from outside the traditional paradigm of Germantown history attempted to expand the memory infrastructure and to shape Germantown history as something more shared by what the community had become.

¹ See David E. Kyvig's foreword to *Defining Memory: Local Museums and the Construction of History in America's Changing Communities*. Amy K. Levin, ed. (Alta Mira Press, 2007), 3. See also, David E. Kyvig, Myron A. Marty, *Nearby History: Exploring the Past Around You*, Second Edition (Rowman & Littlefield, 2000): 6-7.

² Richard Rabinowitz. "The Devil in the (Liberty Bell's) Belfry: the Transformation of Cultural Practice." Speech transcript, May 16, 2003. Mid-Atlantic Regional Center for History, Rutgers University-Camden, Howard Gillette director.

³ Harry M. and Margaret B. Tinkcom, Grant Miles Simon, F.A.I.A., *Historic Germantown from the Founding to the Early Part of the Nineteenth Century: A Survey of the German Township* (Philadelphia, 1955), 14.

⁴ Tinkcom, Tinkcom, and Simon, 3, 6, and 25.

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- ²³ Quoted in Charles Francis Jenkins, *Lafayette's Visit to Germantown, July 20, 1825*, (Philadelphia: 1911): An Address read before various collecting and historical societies in Germantown and Philadelphia.
- ²⁴ Quoted in Jenkins, *Lafayette's Visit*, 36. See also, Hocker, *Germantown 1683-1933*, 152ff.
- ²⁵ Jenkins, 36.
- ²⁶ Waters, "Philadelphia's Boswell," 44.
- ²⁷ Roger Moss, *Historic Houses of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 12 and Mark Frazier Lloyd, quoted in *Germantown Crier*, 31:2 (1981). See also Deborah D. Waters, "Philadelphia's Boswell: John Fanning Watson." *PHMB* 98 (1974): 3-49.
- ²⁸ See for instance the liberal use of quotes from Watson in Alfred C. Lambdin, "Battle of Germantown." *PHMB*, 1 (1877), pp. 368-403; also Keyser, et al, *History of Old Germantown*, 70; and Edward W. Hocker, *Germantown, 1683-1933: The Record that a Pennsylvania community has achieved in the course of 250 years: being a history of the people of Germantown, Mount Airy and Chestnut Hill* (Philadelphia, 1933): 128, 132, 152ff, 161, and 177.
- ²⁹ Susan Stabile, *Memory's Daughters: The Material Culture of Remembrance in eighteenth Century America* (Cornell University Press, 2004): 7.
- ³⁰ Contosta, "Philadelphia's Miniature Williamsburg," 289.
- ³¹ Bodnar, *Remaking America*, 14.
- ³² Contributions to the role of historic memory in Germantown include, Contosta, "Philadelphia's 'Miniature Williamsburg': 283-320; and Jennifer Anderson-Lawrence, "The Colonial Revival at Cliveden," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Delaware, Winterthur Program in Early American History, 1990).
- ³³ Stabile, *Memory's Daughters*, 1-18.
- ³⁴ Michael Kammen, *The Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in America* (New York: Vintage, 1991): 60.
- ³⁵ Studies of Boston, Charleston, Providence, and New York provide examples from the same period and can be found in *Giving Preservation a History: Histories of Historic Preservation in the United States*, Page & Mason, eds. (New York: Routledge, 2004).
- ³⁶ On the development of the historic house museum, see Patricia West, *Domesticating History: The Political Origins of America's House Museums* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999).
- ³⁷ Morris J. Vogel, *Cultural Connections: Museums and Libraries of the Delaware Valley* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 85.
- ³⁸ Vogel, 157.
- ³⁹ Mason, "Historic Preservation, Public Memory and the Making of Modern New York City," in *Giving Preservation a History*, Page and Mason, eds. (New York: Routledge): 133-142.
- ⁴⁰ Son of James R. Lambdin (portraitist of figures like Zachary Taylor and John Marshall) and brother of George C. Lambdin, landscape painter of the later nineteenth century, he was related to two of the more renowned painters to come out of Germantown.
- ⁴¹ Hocker, *Germantown, 1683-1933*, 269, and also Alfred C. Lambdin obituary, *Germantown Independent-Gazette*, 1911, in Lambdin File, Germantown Historical Society.
- ⁴² Editors note in Alfred C. Lambdin, "Battle of Germantown," 368.
- ⁴³ See James M. Lindgren, "'A Spirit that Fires the Imagination': Historic Preservation and Cultural Regeneration in Virginia and New England, 1850-1950" in *Giving Preservation a History*: 108-109.
- ⁴⁴ Charlene Mires, *Independence Hall in American Memory* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002): 135-136, 142-144, and 171ff.
- ⁴⁵ Samuel Pennypacker, *The Settlement of Germantown, Pennsylvania and the Beginning of Germantown Emigration to North America* (Philadelphia: Wm. J. Campbell, 1899).

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- ⁴⁶ See Nash, *First City*, 40-41; also Nash, "Behind the Velvet Rope: Academic History, Historical Societies, and the Presentation of the Past," *PMHB* 114 (1990): 8-9; and Emma J. Lapsansky, "Patriotism, Values and Continuity: Museum Collecting and Connectedness," *PMHB* 114 (1990): 61-82.
- ⁴⁷ John Fanning Watson, *Annals of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania in Olden Times*, rev. ed. 2 vols (Philadelphia: E. Thomas, 1857): II: 261.
- ⁴⁸ Watson, *Annals*: II: 574.
- ⁴⁹ Mike Wallace, "Visiting the Past: History Museums in the United States," and "Reflections on the History of Historic Preservation," in *Presenting the Past : Critical Perspectives on History and the Public*, edited by Susan Porter Benson, Steven Brier, and Roy Rosenzweig. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986); see also Wallace's *Mickey Mouse History, and Other Essays on American Memory*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996).
- ⁵⁰ Thomas Clemens, *East Germantown: A New Name for Ancient Villages* (Philadelphia 1936) and *Quaint Old Landmarks of East Germantown* (Philadelphia, 1939).
- ⁵¹ Susan G. Davis. *Parades and Power: Street Theatre in Nineteenth-century Philadelphia* (Philadelphia : Temple University Press, 1986); also David Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century* (University of North Carolina Press, 1990): 110-150.
- ⁵² Watson, *Annals*: II: 587.
- ⁵³ Nash, *First City*, 17.
- ⁵⁴ James Wolfinger, *Philadelphia Divided. Race and Politics in the City of Brotherly Love* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).
- ⁵⁵ See for instance, Matthew J. Countryman, *Up South: Civil Rights and Black Power in Philadelphia* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005).
- ⁵⁶ See Philip Jenkins, *Hoods and Shirts: The Extreme Right in Pennsylvania, 1925-1950* (University of North Carolina Press, 1997) who described several occasions of extreme nativist group activity in Germantown.
- ⁵⁷ Jonathan E. Farnham, "A Bridge Game: Constructing a Co-Operative Commonwealth in Philadelphia, 1900-1926" (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 2000).
- ⁵⁸ Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge, Mass. : MIT Press, 1995).
- ⁵⁹ David Contosta *Suburb in the City: Chestnut Hill Philadelphia 1850-1990* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1992): 162.
- ⁶⁰ Steven Conn, *Museums and American Intellectual Life, 1876-1926* (University of Chicago Press, 1998).
- ⁶¹ Kammen *The Mystic Chords of Memory*, 38-40.
- ⁶² This was a wider issue, not particular to Germantown alone. See Mike Wallace, "Visiting the Past: History Museums in the United States," 154-155 and Nash, *First City*, 41.
- ⁶³ Conn, 11-16
- ⁶⁴ Richard Handler and Eric Gable, *The New History in an Old Museum: Creating the Past at Colonial Williamsburg* (Duke University Press, 1997).
- ⁶⁵ Handler and Gable, 222-229.
- ⁶⁶ Handler and Gable, 235.
- ⁶⁷ See Cynthia Little on the history profession during this period, "Beyond Text Panels and Labels: Education and Public Programming at American Historical Societies," in *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 1990: 83-95.
- ⁶⁸ See David W. Young, "The Next Cliveden: A New Approach to the Historic Site in Philadelphia" in *America's Historic Sites at a Crossroads*, National Trust *Forum Journal* XX: Spring 2008; Donna A. Harris has briefly discussed this case, among other alternatives to consider, in *New Solutions for House*

Museums: Ensuring the Long-Term Preservation of America's Historic Houses (AltaMira Press, 2007), 156.

⁶⁹ Frank E. Sanchis III, "Looking Back or Looking Forward? Historic Houses in the Twentieth Century," paper read at the Athenæum of Philadelphia Symposium, December 4 - 5, 1998.

⁷⁰ For the state of the field of historic sites and house museums, see *America's Historic Sites at a Crossroads*, *Forum Journal* XX: Spring 2008.

⁷¹ Michael deHaven Newsom, "Blacks in Preservation", in *Law and Contemporary Problems* 36 (Summer 1971): 428-429.

⁷² The literature on historic preservation in older communities is vast. These studies include analysis of economic, planning, and administrative factors as well as architectural restoration particularly regarding issues of women and minorities: William J. Murtagh, *Keeping Time: The History and Theory of Preservation in America*, examined Savannah and public-private approaches to preservation in minority areas; Donovan D. Rypkema's *The Economics of Historic Preservation: A Community Leader's Guide* (Washington DC: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1994) explores community-based approaches; essays in Gail Dubrow and Jennifer Goodman, eds. *Restoring Women's History Through Historic Preservation* looked at the history of women's involvement in preserving historic sites; also Moira Kenney, *Mapping Gay L.A.: The Intersection of Place and Politics* (Temple University Press, 2001).

⁷³ Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House, 1993 edition); *Cities and the Wealth of Nations: Principles of Economic Life* (New York: Random House, 1984); and *The Economy of Cities* (New York: Random House, 1969).

⁷⁴ "Where are the people?" Jacobs asked Philadelphia city planner Edmund Bacon after visiting one of his more successful projects. Bacon also was involved in plans for Germantown in the 1950s and 1960s, part of the Model Cities projects that built on attempts to create "miniature Williamsburg" on Germantown Avenue. Jacobs's view on the Society Hill urban renewal process is recounted in Alice Sparberg Alexiou, *Jane Jacobs: Urban Visionary* (Rutgers University Press, 2006): 39-40.

⁷⁵ Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House, 1993 edition): iv.

⁷⁶ The paradox is explored in Donna McDaniel and Vanessa Julye, *Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship: Quakers, African Americans, and the Myth of Racial Justice* (Quaker Press, 2009).

⁷⁷ See the papers in *Defining Memory: Local Museums and the Construction of History in America's Changing Communities*. Amy K. Levin, ed. (Alta Mira Press, 2007): Jay Price, "The Small Town We Never Were: Old Cowtown Museum Faces an Urban Past." 97-108; Stuart Patterson, "The Dream Then and Now": Democratic Nostalgia and the Living Museum at Arthurdale, West Virginia 109-126; Heather R. Perry, "History Lessons: Selling the John Dillinger Museum" 127- 142.

⁷⁸ Shared with the author by historian Katie Day from a conversation with State Rep. Robert V.O'Donnell.

Chapter Two
“Souvenirs and Mementoes of Washington”:
Preserving Independence, and Independent-Mindedness,
in Germantown, 1900-1925

One of the founders of the Site and Relic Society feared that, “unless some such organization was formed, all the landmarks and relics connected with Germantown’s history would be forever lost.”¹ October 1900 saw the formation of the Germantown Site and Relic Society, a group organized out of reverence for the heritage of the community combined with fear that the very progress taking place would change Germantown’s historic charm. John Fanning Watson’s paradigm meant prioritizing colonial history and celebrating descendents of the founders, using private citizens rather than historians, and doing so in ways that were politically conservative.

After Watson’s death in 1860, the work of Germantown history had been carried on informally by a subsequent generation of Germantown antiquarians from the 1870s through the 1890s during the first “Colonial Revival,” whose focal point was the 1876 Centennial. This was the period when descendent groups had formed regarding history, such as the National Society for Colonial Dames and the Sons of the Revolution, as local historical societies took renewed interest in the past as a way of establishing their connections to the founding features of American identities in an age of immigration and

industrialization. Nationally, the impetus to establish one's historic credentials took several forms, whether through genealogical ties or, in the case of Henry Ford and Deerfield, by building museums that celebrated America's heritage. Locally this took the form of city and neighborhood historical societies, such as Philadelphia's City History Society and a host of others.² 1900, therefore, represented a big moment for Germantown, as it opened the new century by institutionalizing Watson's approach to preserving the centuries before it.

This period saw much nostalgia and memorializing around the country, and indeed it was a Germantowner who invents the myth of the West. Owen Wister in 1901 published the prototypical western novel, *The Virginian*, a book described "as a heroic and optimistic American tale written by a melancholy Philadelphia gentleman, brooding endlessly about the inevitable decline of the American nation."³ Wister was from one of Germantown's oldest, elite families, and his book longs for a lost age. Idealizing something remote like the American west as a way to cope with a present fraught with change was one of the ways the elite of Germantown were coping with industrialization and immigration. Wister's work would aptly sum up the views of some of the Germantown's antiquarians, for it revealed stubbornness about the inferiority of the present conditions compared to something ideal. For Wister it was the American west, but for other elites in Germantown, it was the past.⁴ Wister's brother, Charles, was an early president of the Site and Relic Society.

He and Charles F. Jenkins, along with other leaders of the Site and Relic Society, saw themselves as guardians of a superior past against the present.⁵ They did so as interested volunteers along the Watson model of citizen-historian. The American Historical Association, though founded in 1884, was still a nascent group of academic historians, so the work of professional historians remained confined to university and academic settings and primarily concerned with text, not with objects, which was taken up by museums or local societies, many of whom treated the objects as sacred relics, much as Watson had done.⁶

Considered today, the newly minted Site and Relic Society entered into its mission of collecting and remembering with remarkable action, particularly regarding sites and buildings involved in the Battle of Germantown. Much like Watson had done in the 1830s, members of the Society often scoured construction sites just to get at some of the relics, as historic artifacts were known at the Society.⁷ For the Site and Relic Society to house these artifacts, it meant moving old things around, rather than constructing new museum buildings. A museum became necessary when the collections of three-dimensional artifacts became too numerous to be housed in the Germantown Library, whose director, Hannah Zell had built a small collection of books and documentary records related to Germantown history. The decision of where to place the artifacts, or relics, was made primarily for display purposes, rather than storage or preservation. And since the Concord Schoolhouse, a 1775 building, was no longer being used for a school

(it had closed in 1892), exhibitions of costumes, tools, and furniture were set up in the one-room building, which opened to the public in 1901. Sources record that as many as 1000 people visited the museum in the converted school house in the first year.⁸ The relatively high visitation reflected a level of interest in the past that extended beyond the exclusive leadership of the Society.

The Society's work was grouped in primarily five areas: collections, monuments (the Tablet Committee existed for three decades), publications, festivals and programs, and buildings, all aspects in continuing to establish a visible memory infrastructure that would last beyond the generations. In 1907 the Society became stewards of the old Vernon House mansion of John Wister and it became used as the Society's museum building for the next two decades. In addition to opening a museum of artifacts, the Society placed markers on many buildings and in parks, a service it continued to do periodically, provided, it was noted in the *Germantown Telegraph*, consent of the owner of the property had been obtained.⁹ In the case of one house, Cliveden, this became an issue, revealing the conflict between private and public, and resulting in the placement of a marker about the Battle of Germantown in Vernon Park, rather than at Cliveden, in 1905. From the outset, the Society advertised that it wanted to get at buildings, as the announcement of its first public meeting made clear. "The plan of securing title to various properties of historic interest and properly marking places which have colonial or Revolutionary associations was discussed and a meeting was arranged for tonight."¹⁰

The first publication of the Society announced that it would have both social functions and serve “as an active force in the development of Germantown and in preserving its past history.”¹¹ It claimed the Society would work toward both the curatorial and urbanist needs of the community, putting history in a role of aiding economic development. In practice, though, it was clearer about its role in the former and less so the latter and the results of its first quarter century showed that. The Society was certainly in a position to shape some aspects of development, given the fact that most of the members were descendants of original founders, many of them wealthy. Its first seven presidents until 1940 were listed in the *Social Registry* and *Philadelphia Blue Book* and traced their roots to Colonial ancestry.¹²

This connection, however, did not necessarily translate to largess, philanthropy, or support for the building of history museums, merely the protection of what was left, leaving a conservative streak among the leadership of the Society.¹³ The news item announcing its first public meeting indicated as much, “Many of the most prominent residents of the historic section are interested in the movement.”¹⁴ The Society from the outset was an elite club in a region of many exclusive organizations and, according to one historian, its members used the past to “authenticate their own identity.”¹⁵ Although the Society maintained the interest of many wealthy descendants of the founding elites, its ability to use history to move the community forward would become constrained by the

tension between insular, nostalgic tendencies and progressive attitudes at work in the new century.

One of the reasons was that members of the Site and Relic Society were not the only people who saw value in history. Nostalgia had made the history community a leader in Germantown civic inclination to form more and more groups. Various clubs ranging from patriotic and descendant societies like the National Society for Colonial Dames, to immigrant heritage associations like the Sons of Italy, added to the inability of Germantown to focus. Although it had the advantages of population, economic viability, historic resonance and natural beauty along a major artery, the many groups working independently of one another prevented effective ways to manage change together in the twentieth-century.

The pageants and civic festivals held in 1908 and at various times during World War I revealed the many independent strands. These pageants had their roots in ethnic celebrations of identity like St. Patrick's Day parades, but in the hands of descendent groups, they became public presentations of history. As historian David Glassberg argued, "To patriotic and hereditary societies, pageantry promised the restoration of Anglo-Saxon Protestants to the pinnacle of the social order."¹⁶ Pageants in Germantown followed this track, and established a pattern for the rest of the century, in two distinct ways.

First, the Germantown pageant in 1908 included the celebration of the buildings from the colonial period as part of the pageant. The built environment became an outgrowth of the pageant-model of presenting the past and showed up first in placing tablets on historic spots, but became entwined with saving specific places and turning them into museums. Second, these pageants themselves produced conflict for Germantown. Groups entered into competing heritage festivals. While the 1908 Founders Week Festival was part of the city's festival, Germantown was not fully involved in the plans of the National German-American Alliance in 1908. The Society had to have its own festival and did so with much less fanfare a few weeks later. This trend was repeated whenever German-Americans produced one festival, and the Site and Relic Society produced another to celebrate Germantown's heritage all its own. Even though Germantown would hold such week-long festivals again and again, they created multiple approaches rather than cohesive and coordinated efforts to display the community's heritage.

In a dramatically changing community, different people began to look at history for very different reasons. That Philadelphia was deeply divided was the subject of James Wolfinger's recent study that showed that bigotry prevented coalitions from developing that could really have put liberal approaches to civil rights and integration into effect. In Philadelphia, for whites, "African Americans represented a threat not just to their homes and jobs, but to their very identity. This fostered racism among whites

that undermined attempts to construct a liberal coalition.”¹⁷ Promoting the history of “our people” became a part of countering this threat to identity. And it simultaneously fostered the creation of a multitude of organizations and parallel groups that became a signature of Germantown’s inability to coordinate and plan for growth or how to manage change.

Newcomers like immigrants and blacks were also dispersed and not easily brought together. In his history of transportation during the early twentieth century, much of it using the writings of Germantowner Edwin Jellett, John Hepp argued that, “Racial discrimination restricted the housing options of Philadelphia’s African-American bourgeoisie and although they were active users of streetcars, middle class blacks generally lived in more class heterogeneous neighborhoods than their white counterparts.”¹⁸ As Roger Lane wrote, “Philadelphia’s Afro-American community, despite its small size and limited resources, was culturally and socially complicated.”¹⁹ The German-American identity during this period saw the influx of immigrants and migrants lead to the breakdown of the primacy of the German influence in Germantown.²⁰ Among the paradoxes in the presence of many different groups was that preserving only one group’s heritage became such a focus of so many efforts.

While Germantown was not entirely segregated compared to cities like Tulsa, even the residential divisions had a specifically Germantown character of separation: there were not one or two entirely black neighborhoods, rather black residents lived and

shopped in several segmented pockets like Pulaskitown and Duval Street. Conversely, a city like Newark used its cultural institutions (such as the Newark Museum in 1909) to help cultivate new immigrant populations, but in Philadelphia, and particularly in Germantown, the founding narratives institutionalized by the Site and Relic Society did not seek to broaden the message of Germantown's role in America's founding to newcomers.²¹

Because of the Germantown Problem, these efforts showed some of the tensions among competing groups, with local interests not always at one with the goals of the city at large, and with examples that overrode concerns of local groups in favor of idealized versions of the past or of the built landscape. It was during this period that many elites began to move away from Germantown.²²

The results led to different narratives at work to explain Germantown, with some exalting the past as the ideal and others showing the present to be filled with progress and opportunity. On the one hand there was what historian Stephanie G. Wolf, in her study of colonial social and family life, called the narrative represented by the Society an "inaccurate and tenacious myth of eighteenth-century life."²³ On the other hand, Germantown's black middle-class was thriving and active, as shown in J. Gordon Baugh's 1913 pictorial survey. Baugh researched and presented a history of Germantown in ways totally divorced from the established view of the past as presented by the Society. Baugh captured the segregated sectors of Germantown in 1913, showing

how the black community was coping with the changes that the Society's members feared, and how it was positively disposed to the present.²⁴ Baugh's work kept with emphasizing the local over the national, making it exceptional for Germantown because it showed an alternative to how the Society idealized the past to cope with the tensions of the new century. It was another feature of a community with many separate strains.

What the variety of narratives share, however, is that the interest in history took shape with people isolated in their own spheres, rather than together with different groups. Germantown's independent strains prevented it from using its history as a galvanizing force for economic growth.

This chapter describes, first, the civic and commercial boosterism for Germantown in the first quarter of the twentieth century, which made clear how important history was to the community's sense of identity. The chapter will then examine how Germantown, while primarily positive about the present, also experienced underlying anxiety. Some sectors of the community, particularly established groups like descendents, saw the twentieth century as indeed bringing a "tornado of change," which threatened their centuries-old standing.

Then the chapter examines the work of four of the early leaders of Site and Relic Society. Charles Jenkins, Jane Campbell, Edwin Jellett and Naaman Keyser all had prominent roles in the Society and in the city, but with different interests regarding Germantown history. Accordingly they each applied distinctive talents to push the work

of preservation in different directions, showing in the process some of the inherent dichotomies involved in such work—such as the dialectics between private and public interests, conservation of a neighborhood versus the change of a city, or the heritage of one group at odds with another's. The work of Jenkins, Keyser, Jellett and Campbell may have been produced according to Watson's paradigm, but it revealed the difficulties of managing inherent tensions in the work of public history. These leaders tried to shape an organization whose natural tendency was to be insular and backward looking and bring it into more of the networks at work in Germantown and the region.

Meanwhile, as the influx of immigrant groups and migrants from the South added new ways of considering the past, the chapter then shows the ethnic heritage festivals that posed challenges to the narrative of nostalgia with competing narratives emphasizing change and diversity. One of these narratives was typified by J. Gordon Baugh, whose photographic album of Germantown's growing African American community revealed how the Watson model of a citizen-historian could extend to citizens who saw the past as a testament to progress.

The chapter then explores efforts to wrest control of historic structures for how they reveal the tensions at work. As would be seen in the treatment of different buildings, Stenton and Cliveden at the outset of the century, the Thones Kunders house and Awbury Arboretum in 1917, and Town Hall in 1925, the contradiction was clear that one could not seal off the past from a living part of the city.

For Germantown, conflicting desires about what the public memory truly was clouded the preservation work, publications, and festivals. The celebration of history tended to be excluding in such a way that limited its unifying potential and kept the community divided. The memory infrastructure in effect was not only inflexible (as it was designed to be), but it came to reinforce the diffusion of organizations, the melancholic tone of nostalgia when approaching the present, and the lack of cohesive themes that could have provided greater coherence to Germantown's sense of itself.

“All Hail to the New Germantown”

In 1900 Germantown was growing and was often portrayed in the local news as a community on the move. Population increases were driving a building boom, with mills and factories creating the need for more housing. “Germantown is experiencing just now one of the greatest building booms that has perhaps ever known in its history,” reported the *Germantown Telegraph*.²⁵ This made for a mix of row houses, mills, dye factories, and warehouses alongside farms in East Germantown; with private schools, mansions, and Victorian residential developments located mostly in West Germantown. Mixed intermittently in-between were pockets of African American residential strips. Lining the Germantown Avenue corridor were a mix of buildings, German-style stone houses and tavern inns alongside wood and stone workshop buildings from the mid 1700s, and Italianate storefronts from late 1800s. After 1881 two railroad lines serving both

industrial and residential traffic prompted construction of even more factories in lower and eastern Germantown.

A 1902 edition of the *Telegraph* noted the new century very positively. “It means Germantown’s renaissance—the passing of the old and the inception of the new—the doing away with the prevalent village ideas and the substitution of the more metropolitan, up-to-date methods of business activity.”²⁶ The dual threads of economic growth and the desire to keep things as they were indicated the tension that would become very familiar to preservationists the world over. In 1902, though, the *Telegraph’s* editors saw the economic advances making the village more metropolitan as a good thing. “While the *Telegraph* is proud of the historic past of old Germantown, around which so many sacred and tender memories cling, we bow to the march of progress and join the popular cry of ‘All hail to the new Germantown.’”²⁷

This was true even as East Germantown, long considered off the beaten track, began to get attention. A 1924 article in the business newspaper, *The Beehive*, described the first two decades of the twentieth-century very positively in terms of development. Even if it meant undoing historic features, the move from unpaved roads, lack of plumbing, and poor transportation access was considered a step forward into the new century. “[Though historic]...this section had ceased to progress. Roads were bad, streets unpaved, there were no transportation facilities, many of the fine old Colonial

houses were allowed to get into a state of decay. This lack of progress affected residents and there was little to attract new residents.”²⁸

A number of civic improvement associations for East Germantown sprang up, however, as well as two monthly local newspapers, and “they drew up a comprehensive plan of development, and many of their objectives were accomplished.”²⁹ The builders are “men who could see the greatness of East Germantown coming. Building and loan associations, beginning with the Chew and the East Germantown [sections], have increased so rapidly in number that there are upwards of 20 such organizations transacting business in East. Germantown.”³⁰ The pattern used in East Germantown was considered successful in 1924, at least from the perspective of commercial and residential development: multiple planning associations, supported by several newspapers, lots of short term investment allowing developers to bring about homes, schools, and build “progress.” The fact was the building boom was creating pressures that prompted action by the preservation community, leading to some of the first battles for public history. For instance, as will be seen later in this chapter, in 1890 development pressure prompted concern over the fate of the 1730 Logan house, Stenton. The efforts by heritage groups and preservationists averted its demolition by a nearby factory, an event that showed people some of the steps needed to be taken for preservation of the past.

Preservationists were not the only ones that considered the importance of history vital to Germantown. There were already two other established and growing sectors in

Germantown: the long-standing social agency sector and the business sector. Sometimes they overlapped with history; sometimes they made use of one or the other strands of community action, though not always. Each sector in and of itself was well-established with many strong ties to community traditions, such as the many different churches and innovative educational institutions.

Even though the business, social service and history sectors frequently overlapped, they did not always work in concert. Fragile coalitions sometimes took hold among descendents and antiquarians, business and civic leaders, and social institutions, but only project by project and not in sustaining ways. For instance, Jenkins, Keyser, and several of the first directors of the Site and Relic Society were also members of the Germantown and Chestnut Hill Improvement Association and the Germantown Businessmen's Association. Ironically the interconnections were evident in many of the ways that history was used to promote progress, but seldom with all the community in sight.

The social service tradition grew out of the efforts of faith communities and the long-standing commitment to education in Germantown, a tradition wrapped closely with Quaker meetings and schools in the community.³¹ They received fresh impetus after the Civil War, when former abolitionists like Israel Johnson helped run homes for sick or elderly free blacks. The Germantown Relief Society began in 1873 and was a mainstay of aid to the poor until well into the twentieth-century. Its president was the librarian of

the forerunner of the Site and Relic Society, the Germantown Library and Archive, Hannah Zell. Such organizations attempted to fashion new citizens and mold Americanization efforts among the poor or left out. By the dawn of the twentieth-century, this strand of activism brought focus to demands of government, private philanthropy and community support for mission-driven service, often based on Christian ideals or Quaker tenants.

Into this sector entered the YMCA in 1913 and YWCA in 1917, becoming vital additions to the community, which added a critical layer of national oversight, because the YMCA had a national board of directors weighing in on decisions made locally. Eventually the YMCA and particularly the Germantown YWCA provided two vital components to the development of the Germantowners' sense of place. The first was a strand of professional work. The growth of settlement houses and other aspects of social work brought trained social relief workers into organizing the social service work. The second component added to the sense of place was that the Y movement, even though it was limited, looked beyond the self-perpetuation of one ethnic group and attempted to reach across racial divides to promote solid citizenship. More so than the other traditions, the social service agencies like the Y recognized that the black community in Germantown was there to stay (the population of African American in Germantown Township numbered approximately 4000 in 1880 and would grow to 20,000 in 1920 and an estimated 25,000 by 1949).³² The establishment of a "Colored Branch" of the YWCA

in 1918, while not integrated, provided a platform at various times during the early and mid-twentieth-century for approaches to bringing about racial understanding. This branch was located three blocks north of the other YWCA on Germantown Avenue. (There was also a Colored Branch of the YMCA for men, located on Rittenhouse Street, the former “Poor House Lane” within an established African American community.) These approaches included children’s heritage clubs in the early 1920s.

Within this strand of Germantown’s social service tradition one finds the work of the religious community, one which offered an incredible variety of churches, aid agencies, and schools, which would only grow as Germantown changed so fluidly from a residential suburb to an inner city neighborhood in a matter of a few decades. Even if individual churches were not integrated, the fact that so many different kinds of denominations thrived in Germantown showed two crucial aspects of the twentieth-century story: a preponderance of groups and organizations, and an institutional support for coping with change.³³ Germantown’s Quakers operated on a basis of consensus, leading to the establishment of multiple Friends Meetings separate from the orthodox Germantown Meeting. In 1914 Roman Catholic missions were established for Germantown’s black Catholics, such as St. Catherine of Siena. The combination of many different denominations in a community founded on the notion of religious toleration might not be a surprise, but the fact that, within denominations, there were segregated congregations only added to the many different voices in the community.

The business practices began to take full form in the late 1890s, with the formation of the Germantown Businessmen's Association, itself a direct outcome of one of the week-long historic pageants in 1896. It was not always in line with business planning or vision for the rest of the city. Germantown's business community tended to grow along with thinking of the Philadelphia's Progressive Republicans, who stressed cooperation among different organizations toward civic betterment, by which was meant transcending the ages-old transportation and zoning systems in Philadelphia. The tools for this were comprehensive planning and interaction among various agencies. Like most planning, however, it involved political reform, since much of what Lincoln Steffens referred to as "corrupt and contented" Philadelphia was in the throes of one-party, crony-driven rule by Republicans in Center City.³⁴ This did not always translate to actual reform, and in many ways Germantown found itself on the outs with machine Republicans.

In Germantown, "independent" Republicans like Jenkins and Jellett assisted efforts to build the business corridors (which included Germantown Avenue, the main artery, as well as other key corridors at Greene and Manheim, also Cheltenham and Belfield in East Germantown) through combining approaches to development and business attraction. This extended in 1915 all the way to the northern boundaries of the City along Germantown Avenue when the Germantown and Chestnut Hill Improvement Association

was founded. Each section of Germantown also had its own business associations, such as in East Germantown or Chew Street's community organization.

The sheer preponderance of clubs, societies, neighborhood committees and associations meant that often the positive predisposition to managing change would stall. The process of translating a vision to so many different groups looking out for their own needs would prove daunting. Sometimes the integrating factor was the presence of certain individuals, but too often it relied on that, so that if the individuals went away (or in the case of several of the historic sites—were owned by absentee family members and left to caretakers), effective follow-through and the chances for sustained impact or coordinated responses to the community's needs and changes were diminished, and contributed to the belief that Germantown's best days were behind it.

The descendants of the founders were seldom actively involved in either the business or social sectors. As stated by historian John Lukacs, "In 1900 Philadelphia patricians were barely beginning to exercise their cultural leadership. Philadelphia's people accepted the second rate and lived in the tenuous dream of a moderately thin past, or the lazy acceptance of an over-padded present."³⁵ In Germantown there were several exceptions, such as Site and Relic Society's Horace McCann (a newspaper publisher) and Charles F. Jenkins, both Progressive Republicans who straddled more than one of the sectors, and with views that typified some of the muddled approach that celebrating the

past amid progress had taken in Germantown. For even with Germantown on the move, the number one feature was its past.

Four Early Directors: Jenkins, Keyser, Campbell and Jellett

Examining the work and words of four of the Society's early leaders helps to explain some of the ways in which it entered its perceived role in the community and shows the lack of unifying methods that might have overcome some of Germantown's fragmentation. Each of these early directors provided contributions to Germantown historiography, and with a few notable exceptions, their publications remain among the chief secondary sources to emerge from the twentieth century.³⁶ Jenkins, Keyser, Campbell, and Jellett are intriguing examples to examine, moreover, because they made use of the connections they had to other sectors of the community in their public history work. Ultimately, as revealed in their works of this period, these four individuals were trying to build a body of knowledge in their own way with a larger field of vision than other antiquarian members of the Society, whose largely descriptive papers read at the Society during the first fifteen years of the century tended to be reminiscences about ancestors.³⁷ These four show tensions in how the leaders of the Society, though naturally disposed to insularity, sometimes tried to push beyond its narrow focus. The writings and work of Jenkins, Keyser, Campbell, and Jellett stood out because their activities brought them into contact with other sectors of the neighborhood and the city in revealing ways.

Charles Jenkins actively attempted to bring progressive approaches to the neighborhood, even though he remarked how he himself was a descendent but not a resident (having been born in Norristown, Montgomery County, nine miles away from Germantown).³⁸ A Quaker farmer, Jenkins, was like many Progressive Republicans, active in the move toward civic improvements as members of “betterment societies”, as the many local civic improvement groups that attempted to affect rational planning and business attraction were called. He also served on the board of the Friends Boarding Home, so he knew first-hand the issues involved in the work of the other sectors of Germantown. He often steered history in unique directions in response to economic development. His vision was to set up the Site and Relic Society as the presenter of Germantown’s greatest days long gone.

Naaman Keyser was a dentist and a citizen-historian in the model of John Fanning Watson.³⁹ Of German descent, he represented a connection to the German-American community, which placed heavy emphasis on Germantown as its birthplace in North America, a fact that brought with it conflict with those who saw Germantown’s Revolutionary heritage as primary.

Nationally-noted suffragist, teacher, and reporter, Jane Campbell was of Irish descent. She was considered a director of the Site and Relic Society, in spite of being Catholic, something not well-represented in the outlook or membership of the Society (she was an early director of the American Catholic Historical Society as well).⁴⁰ She

collected scrapbooks that continue to serve researchers at the Society as well as at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. She represented a good example of a leader in Germantown's history community who probably could have been even more influential if given the opportunity.

So too Edwin Jellett, a descendant of Germantown founders, who saw the environmental history of the area and took an active, though, in his eyes, ineffective role, in organizing the Society's collections.⁴¹ He saw the power of place as reflected in Germantown's setting and expressed frustration that the historical community did not go deeper into its responsibilities. As a result of its two stated strands, elite society celebrating its heritage and hoping to steer progress, the Site and Relic Society entered the scene and set about celebrating and seeking to improve.

Charles F. Jenkins followed Charles Wister as the second president of the Society and Jenkins remains a figure who loomed large in the efforts to bring Germantown history public. For the period covered in this chapter he was the face of the Site and Relic Society; his picture appears opposite the title page in the collection of published proceedings of the Society. His presentations to the other societies and history clubs in Philadelphia about Washington and Lafayette in Germantown were among the first publications of the Society. His first speech presented on the occasion of the first meeting of the membership reveals the course that would be taken by the Society. He did so, however, in a tone indicative of the melancholy associated with Owen Wister, one

that would motivate much of the work of the Germantown historical community. His remarks opened the work of the Site and Relic Society by saying,

The reason the outside world has not appreciated Germantown more, is because the town slumbered through a century and a half of indifference to its own greatness, and did not understand or appreciate what wealth of historical interest it contained.⁴²

To Jenkins, as to other members of the Society, there was a sense not of the future, but that opportunities to achieve greatness had passed. The work of the Society had to correct this by developing “a common bond of civic pride and respect for the historic riches around us.”

Part of the work for Jenkins was that nineteenth-century sources were not accurate. This was not because new information had been found, or new interpretations offered, but because the neighborhood had changed so much that the older antiquarian histories were outdated. “We have had to refer them to Watson's *Annals*, published more than half a century ago, in which it is difficult now to determine what places he is describing; to Townsend Ward's *Walks in Germantown*, which only extend up the main street a little beyond Cheltenham Avenue, and in which the numbers of the houses are now all wrong; to the Rev. S. F. Hotchkiss' not altogether satisfactory compilation of articles from the *Germantown Telegraph*.” Of the existing body of work brought from the nineteenth-century, Jenkins indicated that there were not enough books accurate enough to describe the current community to be satisfactory.⁴³ In response, he published his own

Guide Book to Historic Germantown in 1904, another in a long line of house-by-house tours of selected historic sites in the neighborhood.⁴⁴

Jenkins went on to outline a course of work to preserve and mark the historic sites, including providing markers to the revolutionary sites.

No other Revolutionary battlefield today contains more relics of what was an important and epoch-making battle. And yet of it there is not a single sign or letter or tablet or monument, except the two modest stones in our old burial yards--one over an American dead in the upper yard, one over the British officers in the lower, both erected by Watson long ago and both now unknown and forgotten.⁴⁵

He also indicated that the houses of Germantown (described as “substantial” stone, unlike the clapboard structures of New England) demanded action to preserve them. This was a concern not for the asset of the house, but rather for the heritage at risk in Germantown’s economic and population growth. “An aroused public sentiment and awakened civic pride, a growing regard for the beauty and strength of long ago, and for the traditions and associations of the past, may yet preserve many of them from destruction.” He called on the Society “to organize for all time,” in order to coordinate “the preservation, commemoration and marking by suitable signs and tablets or monuments of our historic spots, and the collection and preservation of relics connected with our past history.” For Jenkins this would mean the Revolutionary sites, and in particular the Chew mansion, Cliveden. Jenkins showed very specific direction regarding that site and the pressures on it, that only the Society could alleviate.

You must all acknowledge it is not beyond the range of possibility that in some distant day the Chew house, for instance, might be threatened with destruction. Imagine, if you can, a hundred little houses planned for its stately lawn. With our proposed organization, alert and interested, such a sacrilege could be prevented.⁴⁶

In Jenkins' vision, only the Society could prevent such destruction, the likes of which was ever present on the minds of Germantowners. The threat of growth and development was highly motivating because it posed the threat of forever removing the colonial charm that they saw.

Jenkins went on to describe the ethnic heritage of Germantown and its need to be celebrated by mentioning both the German race and the Germantown Protest Against Slavery. Interestingly, he described the two in the same paragraph in a way that conflated the importance of the Germantown Protest. Germantown in 1683 "marks the landing in this country of a race whose tremendous influence in forming and developing our country can never be accurately measured. Is not this worth commemorating? It cherishes the spot from which was launched the first formal public protest against the institution of human slavery. Ought not such a spot be marked and remembered forever?"⁴⁷ Mentioning the role of the German (but not the Dutch) founders and the 1688 Germantown Protest, a document drafted by four early Mennonites and Quakers, was potentially important to the heritage of the largest growing segment of the community's

population, African Americans. The commemorating of these crucial touchstones of Germantown history, however, would not proceed according to Jenkins vision.

Granted, African Americans were not among the founding generation that Jenkins wanted to honor. As the mention of the Protest showed, Jenkins wanted to honor the progressive nature of the Germans, but not in a way that brought attention to the history behind the plight of slaves or the difficulties of mixing ethnic groups—something on the minds of many as the immigrant groups continued to move into Germantown. Very little of the Society's work mentioned the growing ethnic minorities in Germantown, such as the Italian-Americans.⁴⁸ What can at best be considered as an uneven approach to ethnic history, whether regarding Germans or enslaved Africans, would characterize the Society's work. It represented a way that the Society remained divorced from the needs of the community by virtue of standing for its past, not the present. As the twentieth century opened, moreover, the Site and Relic Society had to contend not only with new arrivals in the form of Italians and Germans and African Americans; the Society also had to deal with new groups interested in their histories in the community.

Approaches that Celebrated Ethnic Heritage

While Jenkins was pushing the Site and Relic Society to update its records, there were different groups taking their own steps to engage with Germantown's history. One of the most important of these was the National German-American Alliance, which

rallied German-American associations throughout the country. Site and Relic Society director Naamaan Keyser was deeply involved in these efforts and provided an interesting link between some of the traditional work and this new assertion of ethnic history. In the first decade of the twentieth century, the commemoration of Germantown's ethnic history would bring about a rift between the Society and the efforts to commemorate the German founding in 1908.

A descendent of Germantown founders, Naaman Keyser, who wrote a 1907 study of Germantown with three other private citizens, was concerned with providing a narrative of the township's development.⁴⁹ Being of German origin, but writing about the combined German and English origins of Germantown made him slightly different for his time.⁵⁰ His work employed the standard house by house approach used by earlier authors, essentially providing a walking tour of Germantown.⁵¹ Keyser chaired the "relic committee" of the Site and Relic Society for decades until his death in 1922, and he served on the boards of several sites close to his home, including the Concord School and the Upper Burying Ground. Keyser, his co-author, newspaper publisher Horace McCann, and Jenkins served on the planning committee for Founders Week celebrations in 1908. Interestingly, the men did not serve in a lead role for reasons that had to do with the sectionalism of Philadelphia.

The three members of the Society were given very small roles in the planning by the National Alliance, who promoted a larger scale than that of local history. Founders

Week has to rank as some of Philadelphia's most successful history programming ever, but the events left a number of issues for Germantown. The German-Americans were extremely well organized and effective in getting public funds for the week-long celebration of Philadelphia's 225th anniversary in ways that the Site and Relic Society was not.⁵² The political sway was garnered by German Society President Charles J. Hexamer and the German historian Otto Seidenstreiker. The work of coordinating all the German-American descendent groups was not a small task, and Hexamer effectively overruled several groups within, such as Catholic Germans. Therefore when the Site and Relic Society and Germantown Businessmen's Association objected to having to move their celebration of the Battle on October 4, the National Alliance would have none of it. Similarly, Philadelphians were used to celebrating the founding of Philadelphia in late October, using the 24th to mark William Penn's arrival. Hexamer and the National Alliance positioned October 6, the date of Pastorius's arrival, as the founding day. He also coordinated the October 6 event in Germantown's Vernon Park, which included Mayor Reyburn and the German Ambassador to the United States.

The Founders' Week was a week-long celebration and included lavish parades, one in Center City and one on October 6 in Germantown. The parade up Germantown Avenue included elaborate, five-foot by seven-foot models of eighteenth-century Germantown houses carried on horse-drawn wagons, large enough to be visible by observers on the sidewalks of Germantown Avenue.⁵³ An estimated 250,000 people

lined the parade route through the city, which included models of the Johnson House and other buildings mounted on wagons. For Germantown, the connection to the past was the buildings, even if they had to be mounted on floats and brought down the Avenue for people to see. The event at Vernon Park included speeches about Pastorius and the 13 original German-Dutch families who established Germantown. The event was a smashing success in terms of impact and attendance. Newspapers around the country printed coverage of it, and the Philadelphia newspapers suggested it needed to be repeated annually, it was so successful.⁵⁴ Site and Relic Society historian Jane Campbell wondered if everyone in Germantown was in attendance at Vernon Park that day. It was never quite repeated in exactly the same way, but efforts were made to do replicate the program model for decades.⁵⁵

As successful as the event was, some members of the Society felt that the Society was diminished as a result of the success. The Founders Week events included a theme each day, but about larger themes than solely those of Germantown's local importance. "Religion Day" on October 4, for instance, dwarfed the events of the 131st anniversary of the Battle of Germantown. As visible as the pageants and festivals were, however, hidden signs of the pressures inherent in the work within the descendent-based historical community began to emerge.

Two rifts, in particular began to develop. One was based whether colonial history should be all that should be collected. The other rift involved the important issue of what

the Society was really caring for the archival sources, and whether it would conduct more work behind the scenes represented by the monuments and public ceremonies.

While the centennials and anniversaries of the nineteenth century in 1877 and 1883 had produced events and celebrations by those approaching the preservation and presentation of the past, with the next big anniversaries in 1907 and 1908 there were more people interested in the past, particularly in presenting their own connections to it. The first decade saw more and more diffusion of the organizing authority for the past as other ethnic groups swelled Germantown to a much larger population. This became a continual source of tension as a conflict between the past as owned by the public and that owned by the private citizens with connections to it. For instance the Society's monument to the Battle of Germantown in Vernon Park, placed there in 1905, would be dwarfed by the substantial marker to the German immigrants presented there later in 1920.

The Visionary Work of Two Collectors: Jane Campbell and Edwin Jellett

Not all the Society's directors were entirely devoted to colonial heritage. Jane Campbell appeared frequently in Philadelphia-area newspapers for her work in women's rights as well as for giving history presentations at clubs and societies throughout the city from 1900 to 1920. Her scrapbooks, together with those of genealogist Thomas Shoemaker, provide collections of newspaper articles related to history, as well as

obituaries and news items that would be invaluable to family researchers. Unlike Shoemaker, though, whose roots were in Germantown and whose collections tended toward his own heritage, Campbell collected items from all over the city, what might be called “scrapbooks of place.”⁵⁶

While a lot of people made scrapbooks about Philadelphia during this period that are still used for researchers, Campbell made use of popular stories about historic houses and battle sites to build a knowledge base about the areas of interest to the history of Germantown, which in these substantial collections included many neighborhoods, organized by streets, schools and stores. While Shoemaker was a classic genealogical historian, Campbell approached history in keeping with her profession, which was as an elementary school teacher, to educate a broader audience.

Jane Campbell was an early leader of the Site and Relic Society who worked in extraordinary ways to bridge the inherent dichotomies of practicing history in a changing community. Being Irish Catholic and not a descendent, Campbell was on the edges of certain levels of Germantown society. At the same time, though, there was a growing Catholic community, including a popular shrine and seminary run by the Vincentian religious order. Campbell’s talent led her to prominence in various circles and clubs, including the Site and Relic Society, City History Society, and American Catholic Historical Society. She was particularly progressive in women’s causes. As president of the Women’s Suffrage Society of Pennsylvania, she toured the state to assist

development of new suffrage associations. Campbell was not merely an antiquarian, but someone concerned to provide context. She wrote articles for the *Philadelphia Record*, and included many of her own photographs in the scrapbooks she collected. Considering that she was a visionary leader and teacher, as well as a cataloguer of records, suggests that she had an extraordinary ability to combine a complex set of skills.

Her research and collections provided a wider context to the work of the Site and Relic Society than solely that of founders and their descendants. There was considerable leadership potential in this early period of bringing Germantown history public, though it was not always brought into the work of making the Society a leader for the entire community. She was certainly the most news-making of the Society directors.⁵⁷ On everything from suffrage to songs, city and church history, to keeping children's playground equipment from historical squares, Campbell was frequently noted in the very newspapers whose clippings she amassed into 101 scrapbooks. That she did so while also advocating for women's rights indicates a level of engagement in contemporary issues that was not the case for the Society as an institution.

The work of collecting for the use of later researchers was also of particular interest to Edwin Jellett, who felt that the Society was neglecting its duties as a steward of collections that might be in peril. Like Campbell, Jellett seemed to be interested in extending the Society's reach through work in areas that it might not otherwise consider "historic." Jellett was a longtime librarian with an avid interest in the historic landscapes

of Germantown. He approached the collections with the same systematic approach he used in gardening. His approach, called “botanizing,” took him around the Delaware Valley to New Jersey and Delaware, as well as his analyses of Germantown.⁵⁸

A Site and Relic Society board member since 1904, Jellett was active in looking at the entire history, not of one particular ethnic group or event, and his approach tended to be more systematic than reverential, particularly in his work to protect and collect the sources. His writings on botany and the gardens of Germantown constituted an attempt at its natural history, though not in the traditional subject areas of Jenkins or Keyser or even Campbell.⁵⁹ His collected information and scrapbooks have actually included snippets of news and diary accounts alongside the occasional leaf or blossom. Jellett is significant today for showing the kind of work necessary in public history to overcome inherent dichotomies that can prevent history from serving contemporary needs.

As a result, Jellett offered a glimpse into the workings of the Site and Relic Society. He served on a committee on historical manuscripts as part of the Federation of Pennsylvania Historical Societies. Jellett kept a journal on his work with the Site and Relic Society, beginning in 1905 and now available in scrapbook form. His descriptions suggest that the interests of the Society, including the descendants, did not appreciate or support the work he thought necessary to provide accessible research to scholars:

I have been forced to labor alone, and much I might have gained has been lost through lack of opportunity to work with others. If I am not personal, I must be silent, so I ask your kindest indulgence.

Many years ago I became acquainted with the fact that in Germantown there was a large amount of manuscript material stored in garrets, the nature and value of which were unknown. In the year 1904, I brought this matter to the attention of our Site and Relic Society in connection with a proposal for a catalogue of exhibits shown at Germantown Academy, but was unable to impress the board of directors with its importance.⁶⁰

Jellett went on to describe the fact that his approach to inventory the collections found strewn in various parts of Germantown, “was then thought the matter was one outside the scope of work” of the Society.⁶¹ He voiced concern in 1920 that the members of the Society were not heeding his recommendations.⁶² Indeed his systematic approaches to collections in Germantown and efforts to connect the Society to more networks around the state proved to be isolated attempts. Nonetheless it proved essential in establishing the groundwork for later scholars, who still use Jellett’s scrapbooks and finding aids. He showed the need to make connections across the isolating tendencies of history-collecting.

Each of the four Historical Society directors profiled here, Jenkins, Keyser, Campbell, and Jellett worked on building the way the Society would serve as a platform for history. While their work remained within the antiquarian structure of the Society, the way they approached their subjects and what they collected revealed, in varying degrees, approaches that had in mind future generations or uses other than only glorifying a founding group. Whether motivated by ethnic heritage or a fear that the modern world was passing Germantown by, their work persists. Interestingly each of these individuals

was relatively well known at the time, including for their work in connecting Germantown history to other networks and sectors, such as Jenkins and Keyser with the business community, Campbell with social clubs and the women's movement, and Jellett with regional groups of archivists and naturalists. The quality of their work indicated that the Society had something going for it beyond a solely conservative heritage group in its midst. But by placing leaders like Campbell in relatively powerless roles, it may also tell more about the Society's founding principles and the legacy of conservatives like Watson. Despite the fact that some of these leaders could be considered progressives as well as leading public figures, each of them could only do but so much to reorient the legacy that Watson that bequeathed.

Pressures on Germantown and Approaches to Historic Buildings

When people referred to Germantown as a historic place, what most of them undoubtedly meant was the historic character of the buildings that still remained from the colonial period. Three buildings in particular show how different the built environment looked, depending on one's perspective. These buildings showed that trying to turn homes private into public shrines did not always go along with interest in the larger story which the site embodied. Ultimately the conflicts would be resolved to the side of the private interests made public, as shown by Stenton and Awbury, or the private kept private in the case of Cliveden. Stenton became a house museum run by a descendent

organization on the model of Mount Vernon; Awbury became a community arboretum but did so by dismantling an Irish worker settlement; while Cliveden's owners resisted public pressure and remained in private hands. These places and how they were kept were important parts of the preservation history of Germantown. But they also revealed that not all are unified over one group's sense of history.

The private family, the local community, and the national interests were all at play in each of the homes and the threats they faced. Each example shows that the subjective view of the past could become easily embodied in a building, because it was the chief reason why something was deemed important and whether it would or would not be saved. These examples make it by no means clear, for the larger the scope of the history of a place, such as Cliveden, or the greater the need, the more muddled the decisions effecting the use of the buildings became. The role of the Site and Relic Society is revealing, in that it was at once aggressive, often public, but largely powerless, a pattern that would reappear periodically throughout the century.

Conflicts about the past had been developing since the first wave of Colonial Revivalism (which started around the Centennial of the United States in the 1870s) and came to a defining moment in 1901, providing a revealing view of how the 1777 battle in Germantown came to be perceived. Commemorating the battle took on the makings of a skirmish itself with efforts to secure legislative support from the federal government to purchase the Chew Mansion and the Johnson estate—Upsala, located across from

Cliveden at Johnson Street on Germantown Avenue. (This is not the “Johnson House,” but rather the 1798 mansion owned by a branch of the Germantown Johnsons separate from the abolitionists.) The drive to secure the Chew house for the purposes of a public memorial were supported at a meeting to discuss the matter and was vocally supported by veterans groups, the nascent Site and Relic Society, and even three clergymen from different faiths. The Society was not taking any chances. Concerns over saving Cliveden from development had prompted Germantown’s city councilman to inquire as early as 1889 of the Chews’ plans for the site, who brushed aside the overtures. Germantown’s concerns were only heightened by the decade of development that had intervened.⁶³ The timing is important, since other historic mansions were in danger.

During the late 1880s and 1890s great changes were affecting Germantown’s connections to the ways of earlier life. The water-driven mills along the Wissahickon Creek had lost out to the steam mills in other parts of the region losing a source of wealth and employment to many Germantown families. The construction of railroads and their expansion into Germantown in the 1830s had changed the landscape.⁶⁴ The placement of the railroad in 1881 put Stenton in the way of industrial growth, particularly as some of the descendents of the Logan family were persuaded to sell some of the acreage to a factory builder. A move to preserve Stenton took place as a result of the railroads—as a line of the Pennsylvania Railroad spurred factory development alongside the eighteenth-century Logan estate. There was not a large Logan family presence at the time, so a

larger group was needed to coordinate the preservation and maintenance if indeed it was to be preserved. As the land surrounding James Logan's 1730 mansion shrunk to a three acre subdivision as railroad construction increased the value and development pressure around it, the National Society of the Colonial Dames of Pennsylvania was prevailed upon to oversee Stenton. The Dames leased the property out for a few years, and then as the era of the house museum began to take hold, it went about restoring rooms and putting artifacts in their historic contexts.⁶⁵ It opened to the public as a museum in May 1900, even before the Site and Relic Society had organized, becoming the first museum in Germantown. It remained run by volunteer committees of the Dames until professional staff was brought on board in a full-time capacity in the late 1990s.

Mary Chew, who lived at Cliveden, took an active role as part of the Dames' effort to save Stenton. This soon raised the question of another aspect of the Colonial Revival in Philadelphia, namely how greater public input on the part of the government was creeping into the field of historical memory. The founding of Stenton as a museum ushered in a period, sometimes considered the second phase of Colonial Revival (and in Germantown a little earlier than the era of 1930s often given), which featured the presentation of the past for commercial purposes.⁶⁶ In Germantown this had the effect of patriotic pageants and packaging of a "Colonial Germantown," but also a role for the Site and Relic (and later the Germantown Historical) Society for real estate acquisitions in the name of historic preservation, something it began in earnest in the 1930s, but which

presented on opportunity in 1901. The legacy of the Chews, however, seems contradictory, in that they embodied and worked hard for the colonial revival but also stood distinct from larger efforts in Germantown, particularly pertaining to the actions of the Site and Relic Society. The Chews, as their actions show right up until the transfer of the property to the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1972, understood Cliveden to be of such historic import that it transcended Germantown and needed to be understood in a national context. The Chews considered Cliveden important in a national context, and whether it was important to Germantown as well did not necessarily interest them.

In 1889 city councilman Thomas Millhouse made the first move to get the Chews to sell Cliveden and it was rebuffed. Nine years later legislation was introduced to force legal action to bring the Chews to sell or donate Cliveden, this time from the federal level. Congressman Hammer introduced a bill that would make Cliveden and a portion of Upsala a national park. An 1897 *Public Ledger* newspaper article spelled out the goals of the legislation and the belief that the family would not really object to the popular desire to memorialize the site. “The feeling of thousands of persons is that it should be a public domain, and there is an impression that the living members of the Chew family, through their very love for the place, and their desire that the property be preserved, would not seriously object to its passing into public control for park purpose.” The article indicated that the Chews have already been tempted by the development dollar

before, “A good portion of the original site some years ago passed into other hands and was built upon.” And then the article put the case in the starkest terms. “There is no likelihood that the present owners will dispose of any more, but no one can tell what might be done by those who come after.”⁶⁷ The sponsors of the legislation, however, did not take into account the actual feelings of the Chew family.

In 1901 the pressure became personal. A public meeting took place where the allies of the effort were brought to try to change Mrs. Chew’s mind. Members of civic, veterans, and preservation groups came out in force to force Mrs. Chew to sell—to the government. The meeting to persuade Mary Chew to sell brought out all manner of colonial revivalists. It began, as if to set the context for it, with a “discourse on the battle of Germantown” by Dr. Lambdin, who had written the first definitive history of the Battle of Germantown on its centennial in 1877.⁶⁸ If the presence of supporters from the United State Congress and local clergy were not enough, Drexel Institute President Dr. MacAlister was there, offering that the “great value of the sites and buildings both as revolutionary souvenirs and mementoes of Washington” made their preservation imperative. William E. Chapman, one of the founders of the Site and Relic Society, indicated that the best way to secure the preservation of the historic buildings was to join the Society and strengthen its resources. General Louis Wagner spoke up for the Grand Army of the Republic veterans groups, among several represented. He publicly held Mrs. Chew to account for not recognizing the greater public good in holding her interest in the

estate. “It is the Chew family’s misfortune to hold property upon such a site. If their ancestors had locked the front door and kept the British out there would have been no reason to preserve the place.” Clearly the private interests of the family should be weighed against the larger goals of the public and the nation.

Such a direct assault on the Chew family’s sense of its home was not well received. The irony is that the Chews were in deep disagreement over the desire to remember the battle and the history of the mansion. But they were living in a house, not a monument. As Mary Chew later wrote, “I really think that the Battle of Germantown is a monument in itself.”⁶⁹ Even though Mrs. Chew commended their efforts to mark points of local interest and was all in favor of “all movements to perpetuate the memory of the stirring deeds performed at the Battle,” she reiterated that the property was not for sale. She would co-operate with any plan that does not include purchase of the Chew property, “which has been held in the family for over a century and remains intact.” Mr. Chapman of the Site and Relic Society, after putting in a plug to join the Society since it was the “proper method to secure the preservation of the historic buildings,” declared that many who had help secure Congressional action did so “under the impression” that the Chews and the Johnsons were willing to sell, and in view of their unwillingness were “disposed to withdraw.” Chapman was the only one to vote against the action and with the Chews, with eight members voting to proceed with the Congressional effort.

Perhaps Mary Chew was immune to the political pressure being applied because she had been exposed to it before with Frank Etting and Independence Hall, when the city moved to demote his work of the Women's Committee during the Centennial.⁷⁰ Probably though it had more to do with the fact that she saw the house in private, family terms. Public displays were for anniversaries within the larger national framework of Philadelphia's role in American history. In 1903, the Chews rejected a similar movement to erect a monument to the Battle of Germantown anywhere on the property.

Try though the Site and Relic Society might to get a monument erected at Cliveden in 1903, it was not until 1905 that a monument to the revolution was erected in Germantown, in Vernon Park, over a mile from Cliveden at a spot with no connection to the events of the Battle. There was much public protest that the park should not be marred with monuments, but the land of a private citizen could be. Tellingly, no dedication ceremony was held for the monument.⁷¹ And though Cliveden did not become part of the public memory infrastructure *in toto*, as intended by the Society, it continued to loom large in the community's historical imagination. Consider that the yearbook of the Germantown High School during this period was known as *The Cliveden*, and until World War II, the school's sports teams were known by the nickname, "The Clivedens". Cliveden was clearly a public idea independent of the Chews' private interests, but that tension between private and public would remain so until the Chews delivered the

Cliveden Mansion to the National Trust for Historic Preservation on their own terms in 1972.

The third historic Germantown building relates less to a building than to a community of buildings lived in by a family of Quakers, a district known as Awbury. How it was treated is an example of private preservation made public, as opposed to Cliveden where a public view of the past was foisted on private citizens. Awbury had been home of the Cope and Drinker families, wealthy Philadelphia shipping barons who lived amid several late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century buildings. In 1916 and 1917, the residents of Awbury took the progressive step of creating Awbury Arboretum by leaving land to the City of Philadelphia to preserve the natural landscape of their community. Located on twenty-eight acres, Awbury has been open to the public for free since then, and cared for by the residents of the community under the auspices of a charity known as the Awbury Arboretum Association. It has been its own independent district ever since. Jellett had written of it, “It is one of the largest, one of the finest, and on account of its family life, one of the most interesting of many home estates. It is like a great park, abounding with walks, drives, rare shrubs, trees, and richly stored gardens... of all the experiments in so-named community life, to me ‘Awbury’ is the most practical and beautiful.”⁷²

Whatever the benefit to the city, however, the creation of Awbury needs to be considered along with the fact that Awbury was created at the expense of removing the

Irish residents who lived on a portion of the property and demolishing their shanty village, “McNabtown.”⁷³ The gift of the land included the stipulation that it be cleared. Here was a case of a site being preserved as a district for what it possessed intrinsically, not for what it would mean to enhance the prestige of a descendent group, as was the case with the Dames at Stenton or the prominent members of Germantown society, as had been the case with trying to make Cliveden public. That it was done so at the expense of twenty families, so that the Cope and Drinker families could continue with their gift to the city, however, suggests that such largess by a wealthy family took the community less into account than they might have believed. Such steps gave families preserving their grounds the reputation in the community for being at a remove from the citizens around it. Ironically, bequeathing something for the good of the city in a way that severely affected some of its residents seemed not to have been too much of a concern to those establishing Awbury. Certainly nothing was reported in the news coverage to suggest that this was anything but preservation on behalf of progress. As was not an uncommon practice regarding the creation of parks or monuments, a certain past was removed in order to foreground another past.

The Hometown Press: A Contributing Commemorator

Awbury provided one example of how the neighborhood’s newspapers, while not technically part of the built environment or the memory infrastructure, did a lot of the

work of the Site and Relic Society in terms of promotion and public relations. Some of this took place with the collected columns and news articles in scrapbooks of Jellett and Campbell. Some of it included the coverage of the commemorative events, but another aspect of enabling the preservation of Germantown history took public form in how the newspapers offered frequent and substantial coverage of the historical community with articles related to history, all in a Watson-esque way, with a remarkable amount of historic content in the coverage.

Part of the reason for this had to do with the fact that a newspaper publisher was on the Site and Relic Society board, making connections among the history and business communities. Horace McCann, the publisher of the *Independent-Gazette* served on the board of the Site and Relic Society and promoted history and the Society's commemorations regularly.⁷⁴ It seemed as if almost every issue of the *Telegraph* or the *Independent-Gazette* included a significant profile with some sort of historic connection in every single issue. A March 1902 editorial of the Germantown *Telegraph* offered "Some Clippings from Back Numbers: Reminiscent paragraphs recalling the days when Germantown was but a small Village." These were nostalgic reprints from earlier editions, justified by the editors to remind people about what was changing. "And now, as it is entering upon a new year and a new era in its existence we think a few items would be of intense interest, esp. to the older residents, in recalling the circumstances and events that perhaps now lie buried in a forgotten past."⁷⁵ Stories were personal, often

family oriented, such as “History of the Shoemaker Family: The pioneer settler came only three years after Wm. Penn—Later Generations Friends of Major Freas”.

This trend of the weekly and monthly neighborhood press to promote the history of Germantown regularly ultimately grew to include other news organs. The business association’s magazine offered another news outlet, *The Beehive*, which first appeared in 1921. *The Beehive*, according to its masthead, was “published in the interests of the Business, Civic, Patriotic, and Historical Societies of Germantown.” True to form, it announced meetings, promoted events, and published speeches of Site and Relic Society officers. As we have seen, left to its own devices, the Site and Relic Society’s publications and promotions tended to be reverential and dry, as if preservation and history could speak for themselves. The business community, however, lent a level of salesmanship and polish that enhanced the staid publications of the Site and Relic Society, in spite of the fact that it was relying on the research or collecting of the Society for historic content that appeared in the newspapers. Advertising in the newspapers employed historic themes, if not necessarily historic content. A brief survey of local newspapers indicate that visual display ads, which began to appear in the Germantown newspapers shortly before 1900, became a regular feature, and frequently an image of a revolutionary figure, or some other colonial icon was employed to promote a local merchant or service. The frequency of the use of the phrase “in Historic Germantown”

also began to appear in the display advertising of restaurants, stores and shops with greater frequency in the second decade of the twentieth-century.

Even if the newspapers and business association organs promoted historic content, provided substantial column space of it in every issue, or tacitly promoted history by utilizing history themes in ads, the approach in general assumed a basic knowledge of local history among the readership. It was assumed that readers would know who Major Freas was. These newspapers, however, lent some professional writing to the cause, making connections with larger themes in American history, and even putting some interpretation on it. For example the first year of *The Beehive* in 1921 ran each month a series called, "When Germantown Came First," which profiled historic contributions of Germantown by category (industry, politics, and education). It was more than boosterism, however, since it had a pedagogical function for the citizenry, shaping a readership with the ideals of the business and history communities. It also clearly wed history and Germantown into the sense of identity that the community was trying to sustain. This came to have some important implications.

For one thing it meant that the history of the community, assuming some basic knowledge of the neighborhood, was being promoted to an established group, with the identity of equals, as Germantowners. This did not promote equality for everyone, for there was little history for those who were not considered part of the connections to the revolution or the founders. The history was not a history of everyone, which no doubt

contributed to the rise of so many organizations with their own membership and their own newsletters and papers. Particularly during periods of the Colonial Revival, when patriotism was a code word for Americanizing minority ethnic groups, this approach by the newspapers would help reinforce the characteristics of the dominant group, namely those with connections to the founders or the area's colonial roots.

In these ways the Germantown newspapers reflected the community's interest in history but they promoted the historical importance in a way beyond traditional boosterism, and without critical analysis, which could sometimes go beyond appropriate boundaries. For instance, this included news accounts promoting the activities of the KKK in the early 1920s, which highlighted public lectures, naturalization, and fireworks, as well as cross-burnings.⁷⁶ While one of the outdoor meetings was quite large (with reports of 1000 to 1200 attending), which made it newsworthy, a year later another newspaper presented KKK gatherings as heritage meetings making positive use of the long-dormant Odd Fellows Hall. The later article reported, "Curious citizens are eagerly awaiting outdoor demonstrations from the hooded fraternity."⁷⁷ With the news agencies breezily promoting the activities of the heritage associations, they cumulatively contributed to inbreeding of the organizing elements of the memory infrastructure, helping make it more self-perpetuating and self-preserving than self-policing or able to adapt.

J. Gordon Baugh and the Commemoration of Germantown's Other Heritage

In 1913 souvenir booklet by private citizen J. Gordon Baugh is similar in some respects to the antiquarian publications of Germantown history. The booklet is a series of photos by a local publisher who wanted, however, to document the heritage of the free blacks of Germantown on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation.⁷⁸ It revealed a familiar type of Germantown historian, that of the citizen taking his interest in the community into his own hands for public benefit, but toward a very different subject.

In a style very much in keeping with the house-by-house guides of the neighborhood published by Keyser or Jenkins, the Baugh booklet gives a guidebook to the African American community of Germantown. Unlike other antiquarian booklets, though, Baugh's used photographic illustrations with captions, more so than testimonies or stories from the old days. In this sense of using photography it is like Watson's planned 1859 brochure showing the sites in the neighborhood that had been standing during the Battle of Germantown, a study which was not completed at the time of Watson's death but resulted in incredible images of Germantown's architecture.

Baugh's booklet works much the same way, with very early photography of the black community giving an impression of the time. It was intended to commemorate what blacks had done with their freedom since 1863. In fact, it shows a reader today the vibrancy of the black community, to whom the Site and Relic Society gave little

attention, but who existed in part of the separated world of Germantown, one which was as interested in heritage and authenticating the experience of its people as the descendents of the founders ever were.

J. Gordon Baugh, Jr. was a printer who worked from his home in the Duval St. neighborhood, which was a black, lower middle-class neighborhood on the north side of Germantown, behind the Johnson House and near the black branch of the YWCA. His own survey described Duval St. as integrated and middle-class. He ran a printing shop and published some music until his death in 1946. His father, J. Gordon Sr. had died in 1912, so it is possible that the booklet was a personal testament to his own heritage and how far his family had come that was projected onto the community at large. It is not known when the souvenir booklet came into the property of the Germantown Historical Society, but it used a lot of the work of the Society in its organization and its style, even though the booklet was meant to state a case for the black community as viable members of Germantown's social and economic life.

The booklet began with a foreword describing the project, opposite a black "Song of the Times," describing the hard times in African-American dialect. It contains the phrase, "They say bein' po's no sin, and povahty no disgrace; But Lawd it's inconvenient, you feel so out of place."⁷⁹ This lyric set the stage for Baugh's study, which went on to show "in some degree what has been done," by Germantown's blacks, who were thriving, not paupers, amid a half-century of freedom. The foreword explained

that it will have to leave some things out, “to give a picture of every house occupied by our people would make too large a book.” It explained that it would show the places that tend to show the greatest progress of blacks in “the beautiful suburb of Germantown.”⁸⁰ Its brief description of Germantown’s general history explained settlement in 1683 by Pastorius, Rittenhouse’s paper mill, and the role of Germantown in printing the first bible, the revolution, and the early government under George Washington. It quoted Watson regarding slavery, saying that there were no records of slavery existing in Germantown (certainly none that had been described at the time of his writing). And it explained the 1854 incorporation of Germantown into the city, for Baugh this was important because it meant that Germantown kept some of its own institutions, such as an almshouse, a branch tax house, and separate elementary schools for blacks.

The emphasis on houses was carried throughout, particularly showing sites of importance and pride for blacks. Leading off the booklet were two traditional historic sites led off the booklet in Germantown but from an African American viewpoint. The first was the Thones Kunders House, where the 1688 protest was drafted by two Quakers and two Mennonites. Baugh cited Watson when writing that there was little in the way of slavery in Philadelphia. On the same page was Stenton, featured because the slave Dinah had purportedly saved the house from being burned by the British during the 1777 Battle of Germantown. The story was repeated for years and in Baugh’s telling Dinah was not named. Both the Kunders House and Stenton used illustrated images that had been

reproduced, with permission, from Jenkins' guidebook of Germantown. That was the extent of the traditional history lesson. The remainder of the booklet was part description and part affirmation of the good citizenship of Germantown's black community. The sites of black history were identified, including some with more traditional colonial history, but primarily nineteenth century highlights like the first black-owned home or the first black church. Also shown was the intersection of Penn and Newhall Streets, with the description as the "center of Negro population 30 years ago."⁸¹

The Baugh booklet was a history of blacks' separate life in Germantown. First the churches were described, interestingly with each church listing it was noted the year of its founding as well as the real estate value of the property. Janes Methodist Episcopal Church, for instance was founded in 1872, with a valuation of propatery \$15,000. Then the separate schools were noted, given the fact that in 1901 the Thomas Meehan school was built behind old Town Hall for the purposes of fulfilling the dictates of the Plessy v. Ferguson Supreme Court ruling that mandated equal but separate facilities for the blacks. The social clubs, like the Wissahickon Boy's Club, and other church clubs showed children in dress for plays. Then the booklet examined the businesses owned and run by black Germantowners, such as Byrd's stone quarry and several offices of doctors and dentists, listed by name with quaint pictures of the interiors of the offices. It then showed the businesses on Germantown Avenue, noting which ones employed blacks, such as John Trower's catering business on 5766 Germantown Avenue—many Germantown

restaurants on the Avenue might have been owned or run by blacks, but blacks were not allowed to dine there.

Other than the introduction and a brief summation, the only text lies in the captions with each photograph. The captions include small descriptions, each of them telling the message of the survey, that of the achievements of his people. Beside an image of a vacant lot garden in full bloom, it stated “this showing what can be accomplished in 8 weeks.” And among the businesses and residents of blacks was shown, without address or name, “The home of our dealer in butter and eggs.”

The closing article reveals some of the reason for the presentation of such real estate elements of the narrative. First it describes that the “Negro population is made up largely of people from Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware and some may be here from several other states. Coming as most of them did, without money, friends, or anything to depend on except menial labor and no one to fire their ambition their progress is good. It is only within the past fifteen years that the necessity for owning real estate has been forced upon them. It must not be forgotten that every family paying rent, pays the taxes indirectly. In the annual report of the Poor Board for 1912 there were 75 inmates at the almshouse and of that number only three were Negroes.” It listed the total assessed valuation of black property as \$87,077,345. It ends with a statistical survey of the ownership of property by blacks, the places of employment (“Midvale Steel employs a

large force of our men”), types of jobs, social life, and houses of worship (eleven churches, valued at \$180,000).

Overall the booklet conveyed two things. First was the care of the presenter in documenting the heritage of his people. In describing the historic sites for blacks it revealed a preservation impulse as strong as that of the Site and Relic Society. The booklet was a testament to what had been accomplished since the Emancipation Proclamation and it is a treatise proclaiming that “our people” have been citizens contributing to the tax rolls, owning property, and building the community in isolated spots throughout the township. This included a few businesses on the Avenue, but also a mix of residential sections both integrated in a few sections not conjoined, as well as a couple sections more concentrated in greater numbers in West Germantown. The narrative of Germantown for Baugh was one of progress, not a decline from a fading past, whose chronology began in 1863, not necessarily 1776. The message was that blacks were living, praying and working throughout the community, and they were not draining from it. It was an excellent example of using curatorial efforts, collecting and presenting, within an urbanist’s impulses to put things into contemporary context.

If Baugh represented a kind of black preservationist by showcasing the heritage of Germantown’s black community, what became of this strand of black heritage? Around the time of World War I there was an attempt by blacks to purchase the Thones Kunders house and make it the home of the American Negro Historical Society, a group begun in

1893. Leading educators within the black community promoted an effort to secure the house to preserve the site for use as a museum for the American Negro Historical Society. The effort was led by African American men, mostly teachers from the local African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, James Caldwell, Sidney Purnell, and Rev. Dr. Alexander Murray. Each of them was also connected to mid-Atlantic black historical associations, like the Bishop Payne Association.⁸² A Philadelphia newspaper proclaimed in a headline that the “Negro race may have an Independence Hall in this house” and that it could be a “Mecca for tourists,” both black and white. The effort to secure the house from the owner at the time, a “renovator of antique furniture,” was limited due to that fact that the “house is but a wreck.”

Unlike Jenkins, the article described the protest connected to the site in great detail and connecting it to contemporary issues. The article reproduced the entire 1688 protest, noting that “copies of that old declaration can be found in most colored families’ homes today.”⁸³ The American Negro Historical Society was an effort by prominent nineteenth-century Philadelphians to preserve and study the experience of blacks, such as Jacob C. White and William H. Dorsey, so the effort to make a Germantown connection, particularly with a specific site associated with black history, made sense.⁸⁴ The society had a limited life, from mid 1893 to 1923, when many former members became involved in Carter Woodson’s Association for the Study of Negro Life and History.⁸⁵ In 1923, the Site and Relic Society even considered purchasing the house, but it was deemed to have

been altered too much beyond its original condition, and therefore not able to be restored.⁸⁶ For blacks, people knew the building well, and it could very easily have been an important site for a powerful message of unifying appeal, in keeping with the spirit of the original protest itself.

The second message of Baugh's booklet was that Germantown's blacks were clearly separate (and scattered throughout the neighborhood), independent and willing to say so. Baugh's images of the residential neighborhoods or business districts were isolated, revealing not an entire black community, but pockets of several different ones. The number of churches suggested a well-dispersed community of believers with a variety of different congregations, all of them well established in valuable properties. This message was not unlike the Founders Week or the many celebratory pamphlets published by the established Site and Relic Society which trumpeted what had been done by a certain group of people. Similar to them, Baugh's booklet promoted a specific group, presenting its places of pride, its contributions, and its heritage. There was no sense of conflict but of independence. This was in keeping not only with public presentations of history at the time, but also with contemporary African American approaches that used methods common to white antiquarians, such as W.E.B. DuBois's own attempt at a black historical pageant, "The Star of Ethiopia," which was presented in New York in 1913, Washington D.C. in 1915, and less successfully in Philadelphia in 1916.⁸⁷ Like the DuBois project, Baugh's pamphlet was independent and more than

slightly defensive, with statistics to buttress the case in several instances of how “our people” were contributing to the well-being of the community. The last line noted that, of the nearly 5000 blacks in the ward of 70,000 people, “a Negro beggar is seldom if ever seen on the streets.”⁸⁸

Unlike the preservationists of the Site and Relic Society, however, Baugh represented a sense of how the past showed what was positive and possible in Germantown, whereas the Site and Relic Society leaders like Jenkins presented the melancholic message of “if-only things had remained the same.” There was a preservation basis for black history in Germantown, at work along the same lines and at the same time as the antiquarians of the Site and Relic Society. It remained separate, however, except for one brief shining week in 1928, because the memory infrastructure reinforced only a limited sense of the past.

Independent Germantown? Preserving Town Hall, or Not Preserving it At All

The case of the replacement of Town Hall represents a telling contradiction with the preservation ethic of historic Germantown. The limited character of the memory infrastructure came to the fore when city plans to meet current public needs conflicted with Germantown’s own public sense of place. In 1923, the demolition of the 1854 Town Hall and reconstruction of a new Town Hall, which was completed in 1925, showed the muddled character of the memory infrastructure when city plans to meet

current needs conflicted with public sense of place. Given that Germantown had outgrown the use of the original building meant a new building was needed. But how would the question of tearing one of the city's landmarks down to build a new one be treated by the historical community that had made such issues about Cliveden?

Beyond the preservation question, Town Hall was representative of Germantown's sense of its independence from the city of Philadelphia, even though it had ceased to be independent in 1854. How Germantown's leaders dealt with the city planners regarding a building that still symbolized Germantown's independence, how it would look, and what its use would be, came to characterize how muddled Germantown's approach to preservation had become. When Charles Jenkins spoke at the dedication of town hall, his remarks typified the Germantown Problem in three ways. First, he did not call upon the old building at all, though it was extremely historic. Second, Jenkins promoted the notion of Germantown's special sense of independence. And third, Jenkins did so in melancholic tones that longed for a world other than the bustling city section that Germantown had become in 1925.

The original Town Hall had its own compelling history. A wooden-framed building designed by architect Napoleon LaBrun and built in 1854, it was equipped with a large clock tower. The clock was borrowed from Independence Hall and its bell had been one that hung at Independence Hall and was cast by John Wiltbank, castor of the Liberty Bell. Town Hall had been the scene of many important political meetings and

groups as disparate as the Sons of Italy and the Grand Army of the Republic held their meetings there.⁸⁹ The hall and its surrounding back lawn were used as a hospital during the Civil War, known as the Cuyler Hospital, serving thousands of wounded and sick. The scene of the 1877 celebrations to commemorate the Battle, located prominently at Haines Street and Germantown Avenue, Town Hall was the official center of Germantown. In many ways it was a shared space for the community.

Nonetheless, Town Hall had become the object of political tensions between the mayor and Germantown's progressive Republicans due to the fact that there was no up to date post office for the community, only a little one "suited to our time as a village." Now that the township now numbered 80,000, it had become obsolete. Germantown wanted and needed a new building, even at the expense of historic preservation. There were debates about the hall for two years, beginning in 1920.⁹⁰ The question was whether it should be granted small repairs or massive reconstruction. Old though it was, however, the real issue was that Town Hall was not loved, some of which had to do with its outdated use, but mostly it had to do with the fact that it was not from the right period, the only period that really mattered in Germantown, which was the eighteenth century.

The decision was made not preserve the old town hall, but to build an entirely new one, with modern amenities and "pure white marble" on the spot where the old one stood. Ironically, given that the city often pushed growth and development at the expense of preservation, some in the city were arguing to save old Town Hall. Joseph Wagner,

director of the Department of Public Works, argued that, “It needs appropriation of \$10,000 to put it in “first class condition.” He went on to describe the building almost as a preservationist, “The present Town Hall is a landmark in Germantown. It was built in 1854 and has been an almost historic meeting place during political campaigns in the 22nd ward. It has also been used as a police station and the headquarters and meeting places of the G.A.R. and kindred organizations. The building has fallen into disrepair and it is in an extremely dilapidated condition at the present time.”⁹¹

The situation was rich with ironies and the construction exhibited many of them. The old Town Hall had been newly minted the same year as the consolidation of Germantown brought it into the city of Philadelphia’s administrative oversight. By the early part of the twentieth-century, the building was seen as part of an ineffective past, not the modern municipal building that other sections of the city now had. It had also fallen into disrepair. City Hall made a big deal of the new construction, offering a big public display of the building model at the Mayor’s Reception Room, apparently seeing it as a way to make public that it was finally meeting the neighborhood’s call for infrastructural improvements.⁹² The design conflated much, putting so many historic features into the building that it was not clear what was to be remembered. It would combine neo-Classicism with a memorial to the neighborhood’s World War I veterans. Designed by Philadelphia architect John Penn Brock Sinkler, it was built with Greek

Revival Classicism and Beaux Arts styles, in keeping with the City Beautiful movement to shape the city with classical touches.

During the planning objections were raised by the community that it was not colonial enough. According to Edward Hocker, some residents, including a few members of the Site and Relic Society, thought the design did not reflect the colonial architecture found in the private eighteen-century homes like Cliveden or Stenton.⁹³ The architect had to consider these aspects of the vernacular, but could not easily reconcile the tension of private architectural features into a public building. “The form of Town Hall is an adaptation of several Classical models, most notably William Strickland's Greek Revival Merchants Exchange at Walnut and Dock Streets of 1832 (in Philadelphia). At the time of its construction, the architects deflected criticism that Germantown Colonial style should have been used by asserting that enlarging that domestic style for such a monumental public building would have been inappropriate.”⁹⁴ Nonetheless the new design solved how to place the 200 ton tower which was to hold the historic clock and bell from the old Town Hall and placed the colonial portico of columns and fan shaped stairs to add dignity and monumentality especially suited to a World War memorial.⁹⁵ It looked not at all like any other building in Germantown, yet it was not exactly modern. It typified how hard it was to preserve in a modern city neighborhood and still be at one with needs of the citizens.

The demolition of old Town Hall was not perceived as a preservation issue by Germantown, even though the building was almost seventy years old. Consider that was about the time lapse evident in the efforts of Watson. The difference was that Town Hall was considered old, but not historic. Almost seventy years was perhaps old enough to be considered in a crisis scenario that demanded preservation; in fact the early preservation work of John Fanning Watson was in the early 1830s and 1840s, when the buildings he sought to preserve were just about the same age, a suitable lapse for consideration of something as “historic.” Consider also that seventy years after the new Town Hall’s construction, it was nominated for a historic register nomination in 1993. How did the Site and Relic Society consider this issue? The affair offered a pure example of the contradictions inherent in preservation in an urban setting.

In his address on the occasion of the laying of the cornerstone, Charles F. Jenkins presented how Germantown’s memory infrastructure was not meant to clarify, but to celebrate what had, and could have, been. Jenkins spoke on behalf of the Germantown and Chestnut Hill Improvement Association and was easily identified as the leader of the Site and Relic Society.⁹⁶ His address is revealing for three reasons. First of all there was nary a mention by the neighborhood’s chief preservationist any prospect of saving old Town Hall. “The old Town Hall is passing without regret from anybody.” By the time the cornerstone was laid there was nothing to preserve, but the work of the Site and Relic Society had already pressed for saving other structures, and had lost a building associated

with Gilbert Stuart in the previous decade. Add to that the Town Hall site had historic connections to the Civil War. Jenkins described the bell and its role in the commemoration of the battle of Germantown in 1877, and how the bell was tolled 100 times on that day. Town Hall's importance was as a symbol of what could be remembered about the eighteenth century, rather than as historic on its own terms.

Second, after describing Germantown's civic pride and independence, Jenkins quickly turned to a different topic, one fully in keeping with the melancholy that characterized Germantown history and its sense that its best days were long gone. Jenkins stressed Germantown's independence from Philadelphia and Jenkins reminded everyone that the 22nd ward was the fifth in population of the cities of Pennsylvania. But, Jenkins said, Germantown could have even been greater. "How much different would Germantown have been if it had been the Capitol of the United States?" The speech talked about all that might have been and how politics of the founders had robbed Germantown of its chance to be the capitol by a lack of compromise between Madison and Hamilton. For Jenkins, this forever doomed Germantown. "Let those who like to speculate on what might have been visualize the great city of Washington as it is today, placed upon a tract of land as beautiful as any in American, flanked by the Wissahickon and the Wingohocking [creeks]." In a string of comparisons, Jenkins laid out what would have been, what Germantown as the capitol would have looked like, and laid out specific comparisons of how Germantown would have looked. "Here the golden dome of the

Capitol would have gleamed across the more beautiful lands below for miles. The Wissahickon would have been the Rock Creek, and the Treasury Building or even the White House, might have been placed where we are now standing.”

There in front of a thousand people, Germantown’s sense of melancholy and longing of what might have been were the key message of Jenkins, rather than showing off a grand new building with modern amenities that the community needed. In presenting his remarks in terms of what might have been, he signaled bitterness about the past, at a moment that should have been a high point for Germantown’s progress and growth over the last few decades. That he spoke about the history of Germantown in terms of glory not gained revealed how sacrosanct the past was considered by the Site and Relic Society’s leaders.

Third, the fact that New Town Hall was constructed at all, not to mention with such overt fanfare, signified that Germantown believed it should have its own city hall, in spite of the fact that it was now only a section of Philadelphia. This fact was not mentioned, but seemed to be understood. And it typified the Germantown Problem, how the building did not help connect Germantown with the city in ways that would benefit both Germantowners and Philadelphia municipal government.

Old Town Hall had for all intents been a town square for Germantown, serving the public with a number of functions, much more so than Market Square. The memory infrastructure, of which the old Town Hall had been such a vital part, would follow this

conflicted model for the next several decades. Thereafter, the true center of Germantown's public sphere was neither new Town Hall nor Market Square, but rather Vernon Park, the lawn of the Wister Mansion. As of 2009 the new Germantown Town Hall has stood idle since 1992 and is dilapidated after vandalism and neglect ever since. Curiously, the Society's and the community's choices of new, history-recalling over actually historic did not seem to have lasting impact. So important was the colonial period that people would rather a new building that reminded them of the eighteenth century than a historic building from the nineteenth.

Conclusion

During the first quarter of the twentieth century, Germantown's history became institutionalized in ways intended to capture the public's imagination, but also to educate the public on what should be known about a neighborhood that was quickly changing. The work of the Site and Relic Society put forth the building blocks of a memory infrastructure with the help of people descended from the original founders and did so in contradictory ways. Whereas the markers and monuments served the educational mission, the fact that the importance was solely determined by the associations to the colonial or revolutionary periods prevented a further understanding of the meaning of the community's history. The heritage of a few was left to stand as the history of the entire community. This approach left a legacy incomplete, particularly in terms of the growing

ethnic diversity, likely the chief reason that the Colonial Revival approaches were emphasized so heavily, as a way to Americanize newcomers.

The Society had the potential to go beyond the narrow focus of a descendent-driven group, but it ended up being less than the sum of the quality of their organizational leaders. Several of them had connections to wealth, like Charles Jenkins, and others, like Jane Campbell, provided considerable leadership and knowledge-building in other sectors of the community. These people helped build the foundations for history-making and memory infrastructure, yet not as far as they might have gone had the narrowness of the task not been so confining. The melancholy of some of them showed that, even at high points for growth and achievement, Germantown would never be as great as it could have been in the old days, a message carried as strongly in the 1920s as it had been in 1901 when Wister longed for a world apart from his own in *The Virginian*. Their efforts to establish a long-term approach for people who came after the founding directors of the Society, however, showed nascent signs of the kind of work necessary to connect with the other sectors at work in Germantown.

The view of Germantown offered by J. Gordon Baugh was a different approach and highly reflective of a vision of Germantown's past that gave African Americans a lot of opportunity. Baugh's sense of the community as alive and growing differed with Jenkins's view that it had missed out years ago and its best days were gone. This typified how Germantown history was not presented in a way to be unifying. Town Hall and

Awbury showed a muddled sense of preservation. While Stenton and Cliveden showed exaltation of the past, the other buildings indicated that preservation could come at the expense of other versions of the past.

Such were the results of the dynamic context of an urban neighborhood at a period of growth trying to seal off a specific version of the past from the persistence of change. How the history community continued to splinter with the pace of change when Germantown began its decline in the 1930s and 1940s shall be explored in the next chapter.

¹ Theodore Barrett, Minutes of the Germantown Site and Relic Society, October 9, 1900.

² Charles Jenkins listed many of them in his first speech as president of the Society: The Pennsylvania Historical Society, The Germantown Library and Historical Society, The Colonial Dames, The City History Club, The Sons and Daughters of the Revolution, The Patriotic Order Sons of America, The Science and Art, The Germantown Club, The Political Clubs, The Traction Company, The Business Men's Association. "A Plea for the Preservation of Germantown's Historic Spots: An address made at the Initial Meeting of the Site and Relic Society, November 30th, 1900." Found in *Germantown*, Published by the Society, 1906.

³ John Lukacs, "Owen Wister or the Decline of the West," in *Philadelphia Patricians and Philistines 1900-1950* (New York: Ferrar, 1980): 243.

⁴ Wister grew up at the family farm in East Germantown, Belfield (which had been owned by the Peale family of artists in the early 1800s), and inherited co-ownership of the 1744 farmhouse, Grumblethorpe. He never lived at Grumblethorpe, and never really took part in Germantown activities, leaving it to the work of others and the house to caretakers. His brother Charles was one of the first presidents of the Site and Relic Society, and his siblings and cousins were actively involved in preservation work in the neighborhood throughout the twentieth century, even when they had moved away from town. Patrician families like Wister pushed colonial heritage into the forefront, without necessarily working directly in political, commercial, or legal professions. See John Lukacs, "Owen Wister or the Decline of the West," in *Philadelphia Patricians and Philistines 1900-1950* (New York: Ferrar, 1980).

⁵ Historian David Contosta examined the work of the Site and Relic Society for how the Colonial Revival motivated the elites to dressing up in period costume of their ancestors in "Philadelphia's 'Miniature Williamsburg,'" in *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*: 120 (October 1996): 264-320.

⁶ Steven Conn, *Museums in American Intellectual Life 1876-1926* (University of Chicago Press, 1998): 151-153.

⁹² “Model is Displayed Visitors at Mayor's Office Note Plan of Proposed Germantown City Hall,” Philadelphia Inquirer; 10-10-1922;

⁹³ For this discussion see, Hocker, *Germantown 1683-1933*: 218-221.

⁹⁴ Nomination for Germantown Town Hall, 5928 Germantown Avenue, Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, prepared by Ira Kauderer, Executive Secretary, Philadelphia Historical Commission, *Feb. 17, 1993*.

⁹⁵ *The Beehive*, February, 1925: 17.

⁹⁶ Quotations are taken from Charles F. Jenkins, “Address Delivered at the Laying of the Corner Stone of the New Town Hall in Germantown, December Eighteenth, 1923.” Found in *The Beehive* V: 4, January 1924.

Chapter Three

“Not All Germantown Cherishes Yesterday”:

Germantown History Growing Apart, 1926-1949

This chapter covers the period when national crises accelerated the factors that made up the Germantown Problem. The factors—too many institutions, sectionalism, and cultural melancholy—already in evidence during the growth period of Germantown history, which culminated in its high mark of population in 1930, continued to pull the community apart during the twin crises of the Great Depression and World War II. The importance of history continued to be a major factor in Germantown’s sense of itself. By the end of the Depression and World War II, however, new players, such as the federal government, preservation professionals, and commercial developers, became actively involved in preserving and presenting Germantown history in ways that challenged the Watson paradigm as never before.

While the late 1920s saw a kind of culmination of how traditional uses of the past had become essential to Germantown’s sense of identity, the 1930s ushered in a new level of competition among groups making use of public history. For one thing, while Germantown sought ways to stem both the breakdown of its manufacturing base and the spread of racial tensions, it contended with the growing role of federal government initiatives in Germantown’s traditionally independent Republican community. Because

of Germantown's rich history, the economic and racial factors which effected many other American cities were actually played out in how the neighborhood treated its past. Soon after the 1925 opening of New Town Hall several episodes exposed deep tensions between what members of the community thought of its role in history and the moment when the citizens actually lived. The tensions reached their most visible point in the 1944 transit strike, but the drama was there throughout the late 1920s and 1930s.

The contradictions seen in the previous chapter with the opening of New Town Hall gave way to a 1927 anniversary festival of descendants in colonial garb. That year the Site and Relic Society changed its name and location, moving from the Vernon House to another historic house, and becoming the "Germantown Historical Society." The name change suggested that the way the past was presented in Germantown also had to change, since greater numbers of people living in Germantown thought what was important about the past differed with the purely colonial version offered by the Site and Relic Society. And not all of the treatments of the past saw history as a relic. The active role of heritage societies took controversial forms, such as the large presence of the Ku Klux Klan in Germantown, or the controversy involving the German-American celebration and Nazi Germany's ambassador in Vernon Park. It became increasingly hard for Germantown to use history to shield itself from problems occurring nationally and internationally.

The most notable events, such as Negro Achievement Week of 1928, the Depression-era Historic American Buildings Survey, and the opening of Colonial

Williamsburg in 1928 all contributed to what many people considered to be the potential for Germantown to use history to its advantage. Each episode brought with it greater professional attention to what had been volunteer-based measures related to heritage, public history and historic preservation. And each instance brought Germantown into the forefront of initiatives involving history which had national implications.

Negro Achievement Week connected Germantown's growing African American community with nationally known artists and scholars. The Historic American Building Survey represented an advance in historic preservation that was pioneered in Germantown with consequences that persist nationwide. The opening of Williamsburg held the promise of heritage tourism that would involve Germantown's history establishment in grand regional visions to reshape history for economic gain. In spite of the many seemingly new and disparate voices involved in Germantown history during the period, there was a consistent feature—the understanding that heritage and history gave Germantown tools to cope with the Depression.

Because the 1930s and 1940s were a period of tremendous upheaval, though, this led to a contradictory development: the more the community publicly embraced some aspect of Germantown's history, the harder it was to coordinate the fragmented approaches to it. In a world becoming increasingly modern, uncoordinated approaches to history became false starts that only impeded the effort that was necessary to improve the local economy. Two observations from the period touch on this contradiction. The first

is from the 1937 study of Germantown by the Depression-era Works Progress Administration (WPA), in its guidebook on Philadelphia, which included a tour of “Historic Germantown,” and noted:

The past is revered in Germantown, perhaps, because it is so closely linked with the present. Yet, not all Germantown cherishes yesterday; on its northern fringe, where it merges with Chestnut Hill, youth is served and serves in turn the commands of imperious today. The street scene moves to a jazzier tempo. The common sight here is not of age, but of debutante and sub-debutante in tweeds and flat-heeled shoes. It is a section of Philadelphia peopled by Americans conscious of their own modernism, who find distinction in a present of hard work and hard play rather than in the recollection of past glories.¹

The writers of the WPA guidebook clearly identified a modern narrative other than one that celebrated the past going on in a different direction.

The second observation, from an editorial by a local newspaper in July 1944, also described the importance of history to Germantown in qualified terms. The article singled out history, but not the way antiquarians might or the way that the local press was normally prone to do.

So many of Germantown’s institutions—its churches, schools, and businesses have their origins way back in the earliest days of the country’s history. The results of the presence of the strong traditions have not always been beneficial; but we feel that for the most part, they have given the community a stability and a flavor that has contributed to its excellent reputation.²

Written at the height of World War II, the editorial argued the important point that not all Germantown’s traditions from the past had been helpful, but they did lend continuity and stability, particularly the historic structures. While many more big civic festivals would

be held during the period covered by this chapter, festivals were temporary, even when successful. They could not serve as anchors of stability like house museums or the built environment. The focus here is how the neighborhood's civic festivals *and* historic structures would both become contested arenas during crises, as what was considered helpful and stabilizing would be thrown into question.

This chapter explores how Germantown saw a variety of competing approaches to public history to help it weather all that was changing in the 1930s and 1940s. Even though some of the efforts offered leadership, expertise, and initiative that had positive economic or social impacts, the lack of coordination of the measures prevented them from being sustainable or able to realize whatever potential there was to use history to reverse Germantown's economic fortunes.

1928: The Culmination of an Era

The year 1928 proved to be an interesting watershed for Germantown. 1928 followed triumphs for the nostalgic history establishment in 1927, while foreshadowing the efforts that would come to bear on the practice of history during the crises of the 1930s and 1940s. It represented a triumphant time for the established historical community, when the Watson paradigm of Germantown history enjoyed its highest level of influence before giving way to new practices in public history. The new practices began to overcome some of the inherent dialectics at work, such as proprietary

descendent control over preserving historic structures versus the input of professional architects.

The established, descendent-based historical community produced a great success with the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Germantown in 1927. Many descendants of colonial-era families dressed up in costume, including in the clothing of their own ancestors. The event included a reenactment of the Battle of Germantown at Cliveden in October 1927. People lined up by the thousands to tour the house, which was still in the private hands of the Chews and only seldom open for tours. The sesquicentennial events in Germantown reinforced for many of the descendants the belief in the Colonial Revival, since the Germantown events were more successful than the 1926 sesquicentennial events of Philadelphia the year before.

The 1926 city-wide sesquicentennial events in South Philadelphia fizzled out due to poor organization and actually turned a loss for its investors. In some respects it soured the reputation of Colonial Revival celebrations in Philadelphia, but in ways that Germantown, set apart as it was, did not encounter. Germantown's popular reenactment of the Battle of Germantown in late 1927 proved that its descendant-based history community could put on a big, week-long Colonial Revival event. This fed the Germantown Historical Society's approach to events for decades, particularly since, such history pageants papered over many conflicts.³ It also promoted the Society's colonial focus during a period when the re-creating of colonial settings was used to simplify the

past and show a moral superiority to the twentieth century.⁴ Members of the Germantown Historical Society during this period were like other patriotic groups of elites who felt threatened by the changes going on in the city.⁵ One of the legacies of Germantown's take on the Sesquicentennial was that a re-creation of George Washington's colonial home, which had been reproduced for the 1926 fair, was relocated to a street in the Chestnut Hill section of German Township.⁶ In an urban neighborhood, re-creating the past in a controlled environment was an attractive option.

So when in June 1928, the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation made public the plans that it had made with the Rockefeller family to restore and reconstruct the colonial, pre-revolutionary state capital of Virginia, many leaders of the Germantown Historical Society paid attention to the use of historic restoration for economic impact and tourism. As we will see later in this chapter, the outsized influence of Colonial Williamsburg as a model would have a lingering impact on Germantown's conflicted approaches to history. The Williamsburg model invigorated Germantown's effort, propelled by what historian John Bodnar described as patriotic groups' attempts to capitalize on descendants' "special interest in the past."⁷ Not all descendent preservationists, though, were interested in the re-creation of an ideal past.

Infused with the spirit of private philanthropy regarding preservation was Germantown's Frances Anne Wister, a colonial descendent, who began to push for a Philadelphia-wide survey of historic architecture in 1928 and 1929. As will be seen, this

effort would grow into a prototype for the national Depression-era program, the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS). So great was Germantown's collection of historic buildings, that HABS work would begin there. The HABS initiative began the process of professionalizing historic preservation, in this case sponsored by the national government. It also linked Germantown building preservation with efforts in Philadelphia. The seeds were sown by Wister as a bridge between private and public support of preservation. The connections between Philadelphia's regional approach to preservation and that of the federal government began with Frances Anne Wister stretching private funds for municipal approaches to preservation surveys in the late 1920s, an effort which ultimately led to preservation with government funds.

Portrait of Germantown in 1930

Germantown approached 1930 on the one hand feeling good about itself. The business community was trumpeting New Town Hall as a business center for the bustling community and its growing population. The Germantown Businessmen's Association celebrated its 30th anniversary in April 1928 with a rally and a banquet, including a speech by Philadelphia Mayor Mackey. The outward signs were good. As the headline of the Germantown *Beehive*, the publication of the Germantown business community would declare two years later, "Germantown Presses Forward: No Business Depression Here." The reason for the rosy outlook was the growth in population recorded in the 1930

census, which recorded an increase of nearly 31,000 people in ten years, resulting in over 116,000 inhabitants of the 22nd ward.⁸

At the same time, however, obvious fractures were becoming more acute. With the growth in Germantown during the 1920s, a neighborhood emerged that was very different from the white suburb it had been only a few decades previously. Moving in were many Jewish, Catholic, and Italian residents, as well as a growing number of African Americans.⁹ This coincided with national trends regarding immigration and migration.

A reason for the influx was economic opportunity. During the period 1920 to 1930, 7 percent of the total Black population in the South moved north (about 554,000 Black Southerners). In Philadelphia it occurred when it did because of economic developments—which took the form of lower European immigration due to World War I and increases in northern production, creating a shortage of labor in the north. Hostile conditions in the South were also a factor in bringing blacks northward in ways different from before.¹⁰ After the war the labor shortage continued because of increased productivity but also quotas on European immigration. Between 1922 and 1924, nearly 10,000 migrants moved to Philadelphia each year.¹¹ The population of African Americans in the German Township numbered approximately 4,000 in 1880 and grew to 20,000 in 1920 and an estimated 33,000 by 1949.¹² Social agencies like the YWCA began to find ways to cope with these rapid changes in population. One of the ways it

did was the creation of more agencies, associations, and organizations. What happened in Germantown during the decade, therefore, had to be seen in a context of hopefulness mixed with wariness.

Unlike the YWCA, many organizations attempted to shore up the identity of their own people in the face of changes and threats to a way of life. Among the many already established descendant-based groups were nativist lodges and hereditary societies, such as the Junior Order of United American Mechanics, and the Patriotic Order Sons of America. Some of them delved into history, such as the Junior Order using the old Concord School for meetings, or the Colonial Dames establishing Stenton as a museum in 1900. Extreme elements were also present, though, such as the Germantown klavern, the largest branch of the Ku Klux Klan in the city of Philadelphia in the mid-1920s.

The KKK numbered over 1,200 Klan members and was active in the Germantown section into World War II.¹³ As historian Russell Kazal wrote, “most Germantowners did not burn crosses, but the views expressed in their most extreme form by the Klan—the fear of new immigrants and African Americans as racial threats to America” created long-standing tension.¹⁴ There was a lot of Ku Klux Klan activity in Germantown in the 1920s and 1930s, indicating the extreme version of the tendency seen among heritage groups toward self-identity and exclusion of others.¹⁵ The KKK offered programs and community gatherings just like many of the other heritage groups. A key difference was that these involved at least a couple of cross burnings.¹⁶ Extreme views like those of the

KKK may not have been supported throughout Germantown, but there were certainly examples of everyday segregation at work.

Many movie theaters were segregated and there had been “separate but equal” elementary schools since 1901. Even though many blacks were employed in restaurants or as caterers, few of them would have been able to eat in establishments on Germantown Avenue. There were different clubs and churches for blacks and whites even within the same denomination or faith.¹⁷ The more venerable institutions, such as the Germantown Cricket Club and the Germantown Historical Society, were closed to minorities.¹⁸ And Germantown Friends Meeting did not permit blacks until 1947. The racial aspect of heritage and patriotic groups spilled over to larger, city-wide divisions that threatened that sectional differences might become a norm. Germantown in 1928 was not exactly the place where one would expect to find a dazzling assembly of African American artistic and cultural talent for the broad public.

Philadelphia has been described during this period as highly charged in terms of racial and ethnic division.¹⁹ Threats to identity from the search for jobs in an economy in decline accelerated the trend to division and segregation. For Germantown this complicated the divisions, such as with African Americans even considering incoming black migrants as a threat, as one church did in the late 1920s.²⁰

Racism was not the only element contributing to the sense of division. Throughout Philadelphia there had been concerns that each area of the city pursued goals

separate from one another, but also separate from the city as a whole. The concern at the time was called “Sectionalism.” Sectionalism and its tendency to create an overabundance of community organizations has certainly been true in Germantown and was recognized as a threat as early as the 1920s. Germantown Businessmen’s Association secretary, George Bodine, a banker, cautioned, “’Tis hard to realize just how many organizations there are in Germantown.”²¹ A call for a more centralized body to manage the many divergent organizations, societies, and clubs was becoming more frequent. *The Beehive*’s editors proclaimed:

Let Germantown learn the lessons of greater co-operation. We shall not advertise other parts of our great country by quoting what they are accomplishing by working together. We do not mean to imply that the various sections of Germantown are in any way antagonistic to each other, but does a spirit of the closest cooperation prevail among the representatives of Germantown’s districts?

It seems that the many appeals for a central organization to work in the interest of the entire Germantown community do not bear fruit. We shall not discuss the accomplishments of such a body, but rather ask this question—*If the sections of Germantown have developed to such a great degree by working independently, how much greater would that development be if all the various business and civic organizations had added to the many movements necessary to the advancement of Germantown?* (Emphasis in original).

If the issue for Germantown was no coordination of the intra-neighborhood organizations, this likewise mirrored a growing concern in the city of Philadelphia as a whole, for whom “co-operation” had been a lack of concern among municipal reformers and planners and for whom the many divisions within the city were a growing threat.²²

Mayor Mackey's address to the 30th anniversary of the Germantown Businessmen's Association had preached the importance of working together, particularly because of the fear of growing exodus of people and business to the suburbs. "United support of transportation plans will avoid sectionalism. Even though there are transportation improvements planned for certain sections, they are not for the sections of the city alone, but as part of a defensive program for the good of Philadelphia."²³ The businesses were on the alert that the good of the city was the aim of working together and that the work of bringing the disparate groups together, similar to keeping the sections of the city together, was important for the greater good.

Working together within this context of multiple and separate organizations in an ethnically divided community was something that did not take place often in Philadelphia, much less Germantown. One exception, and a sign that indicated it might be possible to make systematic working together across sectors and institutions, was the very ambitious Negro Achievement Week of April 1928.

"The Biggest Event of Its Kind Ever Held in Germantown"²⁴

Amid the sectionalism and ethnic tensions which contributed to a confused sense of Germantown identity, perhaps even because of it, there came a high-minded approach to race in 1928 that remains unequalled in Germantown history. Of all the history festivals and civic celebrations held in Germantown in the twentieth century, the 1928

Negro Achievement Week stands out as the most noteworthy ever. Ironically enough, at the same moment of concern voiced by the business community about diffusion there came evidence of how groups could be harnessed together for something larger than the sum of the parts. As the *Philadelphia Tribune* reported, “Never in the history of this community have Germantown residents been so stirred up as they were during the past seven days where Negro Achievement Week took place.”²⁵

The week after Easter 1928 marks the time when the Harlem Renaissance came to Germantown to celebrate the Negro contribution to American arts and letters. The events of the week were hosted at different venues throughout Germantown. The first day’s feature, titled “Opening Meeting,” was an address by Dr. Alain Locke, often considered the “Father of the Harlem Renaissance.” As with several of the week’s programs, the opening event involved a music portion. The event was held at the Germantown Theater, right off of Chelton on Germantown Avenue, Germantown’s main commercial district.

The following evening featured a live radio simulcast from Wanamaker’s Department Store in Center City on station *WOO*, so that the famous Wanamaker organ could be used by Harry T. Burleigh, a nationally noted organ soloist, accompanied by the Robert Curtis Ogden Association Band, which was listed as “an organization of Negro employees for educational, musical and spiritual uplift.” The concert was simulcast in Germantown at the Germantown Public Library and featured on *WOO*’s weekly broadcast. The following evening featured “Art Night,” with a program that featured

William L. Hansberry, a professor of African history at Howard University and special guest, Laura Wheeler Waring, a nationally known artist who was the winner of the 1927 Harmon Foundation Award. As part of the artistic features of the week, at least one business along Germantown Avenue, Staton's Art Store featured posters and prints of African American artists, such as Henry O. Tanner and Laura Wheeler Waring. Staton's was a picture gallery that dated from 1893, located at the corner of Coulter St. and Germantown Avenue, not far from Market Square. And all week long there was an exhibition at the Germantown Public Library on the contributions of African Africans to art, literature, and music.²⁶

Wednesday night continued the program at the Germantown Library with another presentation by Alain Locke as well as a lecture on African American literature by the head of the Cheyney Normal School, Leslie Pinckney Hill. Thursday's evening was a big event, titled "Community Meeting" and was held at the Y.M.C.A. It featured Dr. W.E.B. DuBois lecturing on "Contributions by the Negro to American Life," followed by a performance of the Cheyney school choir.

The week concluded Friday evening with the only event with paid admission (seventy-five cents). That admission entitled one to attend a concert performance and lecture by Locke colleague and philosopher James Weldon Johnson on the "The Negro in Music, Art and Literature." Johnson was the president of the N.A.A.C.P. at the time. The event was held at the Germantown Friends School, whose head of school, Stanley R.

Yarnall, presided. Yarnall served on the board of the Y.M.C.A. as well as on the committee for Negro Achievement Week. An extra feature for the closing evening's program was the performance of Clarence Cameron White, the nation's most prominent African-American classical musician.²⁷

Negro Achievement Week was therefore ambitious in depth and breadth. And judging from the reports of the host committee, it was considered a success. The final report by Beulah McNeill, one of the charter members of the inter-racial committee and a member of the Colored Branch of the Y, indicated that planners considered it successful both in attendance and in raising awareness. 3592 people were registered to attend any or all of the meetings, though actual attendance has been shrouded in glowing coverage of the event.²⁸ According to the report to the event committee, there were high expectations that this would lead to a "new heaven and new earth" for those who live in Germantown. "It set the Negro community ahead 25 years!" one of the survey responses claimed.

"Negro Achievement Week" celebrations were the brainchild of Carter Woodson, professor of History at Howard University, who had begun producing them in 1925 as a way to celebrate African Americans and were the forerunner to what is now Black History Month.²⁹ Using the press and coordinated events to bring together different disciplines to commemorate one theme, particularly in the urban areas of the eastern United States, Woodson helped promote the story of the involvement of Blacks in

the development of American life, industry and culture. Words like “contribution” and “accomplishment” were used often, but, even mainstream Caucasian newspapers frequently published articles on African art and culture. In her examination of the Negro Achievement Week in Chicago the year before Germantown’s, historian Lisa Meyerowitz observed, “Both blacks and whites supported the Harlem Renaissance in an effort to promote the advancement of blacks in America.”³⁰ According to Meyerowitz, the effort to highlight the Harlem Renaissance brought about a broad combination of examples of what its leading proponent, Dr. Alain Locke, did by publicizing the emergence of the “New Negro.” “I do not think it too much to say that through artistic achievement the Negro has found a means of getting at the very core of the prejudice against him, by challenging the Nordic superiority complex,” wrote Locke.³¹

Such views emphasized the racial, rather than the class component, of African Americans in the twentieth century. Bringing more of the variety of contributions to the public would be a beginning of describing African Americans as distinctly American, but also making known the elements that were also uniquely African about their ethnic heritage. Such was the case in cities with substantial black populations, and particularly a solid middle-class African-American population, which was beginning to see obstacles from white Americans, particularly over jobs, but also from increasing migration from southern blacks, further diminishing what little cohesiveness lay among the black community as a whole.

Historian Charles P. T. Banner-Haley has written about Philadelphia during this period, emphasizing the way the Locke and DuBois tried to use these subjects as unifiers within the community as well as promotion outside it. “After the First World War, the rigid caste system in black middle- and upper-classes did little to help black migrants. With the mass movement to northern cities, black intellectuals shifted the focus of their thinking about the condition. ‘Race Men’ such as Carter Woodson and DuBois hailed the historical and literary achievements of certain black thinkers, especially the writers in the Harlem Renaissance.”³² This group deemphasized the lack of rights and economic equality for the time being, in order to demonstrate the value of the race within American society. The group of so-called “race men” also included Locke and saw presenting the achievements and contributions by Blacks as a way of presenting a black man who was an American yet one with a rich cultural heritage.

Only during this period did such high-minded approaches fully hold sway. Soon thereafter in the Great Depression new ideas were generated and debates deepened among black intellectuals, ultimately splitting the intelligentsia into two divisions around race and class during the period of greatest economic hardship. In the late 1920s, Philadelphia newspapers were often filled with articles about black history, particularly in February, a month when history was frequently used to promote Lincoln and Washington in the month of their births. In the late 1920s it was very common to see published articles by Dr. Albert Barnes about African art or printed orations by W.E.B. DuBois

about race in America in mainstream newspapers, or to mention the birth date Frederick Douglass in February as well.

Alain Leroy Locke was also a frequent contributor to such discussions and public articles. Both he and DuBois had significant Philadelphia roots.³³ DuBois had published his famous study, *The Philadelphia Negro*, while living in Philadelphia. Locke grew up in Philadelphia, attended Central High School, and was a descendant of Ishmael Locke, one of the early teachers of the Philadelphia Institute for Colored Youth (the forerunner of Cheney Normal School teachers college).³⁴ Both of them published often during this period of the ways to provide “uplift” to African Americans.

That this approach to race in the late 1920s was supported by media and intellectual circles is not surprising, even in a city with so many divisions, but there was a base of financial support as well. One facet of this promotion of African-American culture was the development of philanthropic means to support budding African American artists. Of the philanthropic organizations devoted to the cause of the “New Negro,” the Harmon Foundation, founded in 1922 by New York City real estate tycoon William E. Harmon, was one of the more significant. In 1925 the Harmon Foundation established awards for achievement in literature, music, the fine arts, industry and business, science and invention, education, and religion, carrying a \$400 first-place award and a \$500 award for race relations. Its first art exhibition was held in New York in 1926 at the International House.³⁵ One year later an achievement week was held in

Chicago, and a year after that in Germantown, with considerable support from the Harmon Foundation. Indeed the Germantown event included several Harmon Foundation award winners in art and in music on the program for throughout the week.³⁶

While Woodson, Locke and DuBois conceived of these events at the national level, the local groundwork was done by a joint, inter-racial committee of the YWCA and its Colored Branch. Planning for the Germantown event began in earnest in 1925, but had been discussed as early as five years before.³⁷ The YWCA was extremely creative in its administration to provide such openness to heritage. It actually stemmed from organizational philosophy. Maggie Kuhn, who became famous later on in her life as a senior citizen activist, worked at the Germantown Y in 1930, in training women in business and professional skills. According to Kuhn, the Y mission believed that its strength was its sense of association, employing a method called “group work” which emphasized group association.³⁸ Ironically, the group work employed by the YWCA involved a program that attempted to promote greater relations among groups by highlighting the achievements of one. It would be one of the ways that the YWCA’s efforts was both part of, and willing to extend, the approaches common in Germantown.

The planning committee was made up predominately of women of the YWCA, but included three members of the Negro Branch of the Y. Its composition reflected some of the individuals who had made the creation of the Black branch of the YWCA possible, namely Mrs. William Shipley and Eva Bowles. Shipley was the wife of a

prominent Germantown banker and though white, she served as chair of the board of the Colored Branch for five years. In that capacity she worked closely with Eva Bowles, a noted social worker who was appointed director of the Colored Work Committee of the Young Women's Christian Association. She believed that the YWCA was "the pioneer in interracial experimentation."³⁹ Bowles' close supervision of the Germantown Y branch work was essential to that organization getting off of the ground. Shipley and Mrs. Norman Perkins, whose husband was treasurer of the event in his capacity as vice-president of the Germantown Trust, drew other members of the committee from the social service community and some who served on the boards of the relief agencies in Germantown.⁴⁰

Meanwhile, African-American heritage was emphasized in some of the branch's programming. After Shipley's direction of the Colored Branch passed to its first black chair, Mrs. Olivia Yancy Taylor, the black branch of the Y had held a variety of black heritage events during the 1920s. Local groups using the branch of the Y were encouraged to name their clubs after notable African American women, such as the Phyllis Wheatley Club and the Fannie Coppin Grade School girl reserves.⁴¹ Many of these efforts had a decidedly political content, yet were coordinated by the Black Y solely for its membership, with little fanfare, unlike the 1928 event.

How complex the issue of group identity was for some of the groups in Germantown is revealed by an image of the Hospitality Committee of the Negro Branch

of the YWCA showing African-American women dressed for a George Washington Tea in February 1928, a few weeks before Negro Achievement Week.⁴² In the image and adjoining report, ten prominent black women were dressed as George and Martha Washington, complete with white wigs and colonial-era breeches, in front of an American flag. The image is important, for it shows how African American women considered it part of their patriotic identity to dress in colonial garb as the iconic figures, George and Martha Washington. It also indicates the degree to which the version of American history that was popular and most often promoted in Germantown was of only one variety, colonial.

Nor did the women dressed as George and Martha Washington typify the independent strain of African-American heritage displayed in J. Gordon Baugh's 1913 commemorative booklet showing Germantown's black community. The ladies of the black YWCA represented a type of appropriation of the way the Germantown elite showed off their upper class status, suggesting an effort to claim their own primacy within the changing African-American community; dressing in the way of the Germantown elite would establish the women of the Negro branch of the Y as more established than the new African Americans in Germantown. Such an approach was not uncommon among African Americans after World War I.⁴³ The ladies in effect put upon themselves the trappings of what the elite would do, they had settled in to a comfortable existence in Germantown. From that they could showcase their own American patriotic

sensibilities and lay claim to American history. The image can also be understood as the women expressing a desire and a willingness to participate in a shared history not available to it by the exclusive practices of heritage groups or the lack of African American history in popular culture. On the other hand, in an ironic way, the women dressed up probably would have pleased John Fanning Watson for the way they took American history into their own hands.

So while some African American women were acting like the descendant re-enactors, prominent white women of the YWCA were trying to reach a new level of understanding about the wider world of African history and culture. Nor was the week a narrow bastion of those individuals only associated with the YWCA. For instance other organizations held programs in conjunction with the events of the week. Even the Woman's Club of Germantown hosted a program on the "Negro in American Literature," during the week.⁴⁴ This from an exclusive group who used the historic Johnson House as their club headquarters and employed blackball policies regarding membership well into the middle of the century.

Ironically, the Women's Club made very little about the role of its own building in African-American history, since the Johnson House would decades later be shown to be a station on the Underground Railroad (to be covered in a later chapter), a subject that was little known nor widely discussed in Germantown in the 1920s. Perhaps the inclusion of the Women's Club of Germantown into the Negro Achievement Week

programming was born of proximity, since the Johnson House was located but a block and a half from the Black branch of the YWCA. If so, the proximity was also part of the slow integration of middle-class African Americans into that section of town, since the Duval Street block was one of Germantown's most integrated and stable neighborhoods with both white and Black residents, and several of the leaders of the Black YWCA lived there for many years, no doubt walking right past the Women's Club on the way to the Y.⁴⁵ But this was as close as the historical community would get to Negro Achievement Week in Germantown. The events of Negro Achievement Week involved a wide spectrum of collaborators, but none from the historical community or the Site and Relic Society.

Institutional support was provided by the Germantown Friends School and the Germantown Public Library. "Negro Achievement Week" involved cultural and educational institutions locally and regionally, including Germantown Friends School and Cheyney State College (at the time called "The Cheyney Normal School") and put national issues out for local consumption. Interestingly, though the program would not involve any local history, Negro Achievement Week used the established model of a week-long celebration and several business tie-ins in a community-wide educational effort. This made it seem very much in keeping with other Germantown history programs, such as the successful 1927 "Sesquicentennial Week." Given its scale and success, and the stunning array of talent it attracted to various locations on Germantown

Avenue, though, “Negro Achievement Week” surpassed anything the history community had produced.

The media coverage on the event was relatively light in the local papers, which might be explained by the fact that the Germantown *Telegraph* was published by one of the historical society’s board members, Horace McCann. There was one organ that saw the event as significant. The Germantown Businessmen’s Association newspaper, *The Beehive*, featured a remarkable cover story on Negro Achievement Week. But unlike the few bits of coverage in the downtown papers like the Philadelphia *Tribune* (Philadelphia’s African American newspaper) or the *Inquirer*—both of which had parroted the press releases of the Y—the coverage in *The Beehive* kept in the true spirit of the week’s program. It promoted not only the week’s program events but presented a profile of the state of Germantown’s African-American community, with coverage of the progress made at some of the social relief agencies getting as much copy as the events of the intellectuals and artists coming to town. The cover story featured the completion of an ambitious project, the building of a new swimming pool for the Wissahickon Boys Club—a Germantown youth club founded for African-Americans in 1903. The opening page remarked on the “New Negro”, the title of a book and a concept promoted by Alain Locke: “Since the World War full significance of the New Negro Movement has dawned upon those who think racially. ... And during recent years, has given evidence of this arrival by his expression, noticed especially along the lines of music, art, and

literature.”⁴⁶ The article described many of the schools in Germantown that served the African American community, though these were segregated, there were several, like the Hill School, that were well-established institutions in Germantown. The Joseph Hill School had grown out of a tradition of educating black children since 1842.⁴⁷ If the business community’s organ, *The Beehive*, could present the work of the African-American community in glowing terms, it was a signal of the flowering of this community in the first three decades of the century.

There were, however, concerns about the event from the black community. One observer Miss Nellie R. Bright, voiced hers to the committee as a member of the black branch of the YWCA. She described some of the impressions of a general observer, and not a member of the committee, thereby reflecting a bit less optimism about the events of the week. “It was a feast long to be remembered by all well-thinking people of both groups. I did wish, however, that the opening meeting had been held in more cheerful surroundings, that there had been standing room only, and that all of the music rendered at that time had been of the same rich beauty as that of the singing of the chorus. I stood looking into a shop window on Germantown Avenue, entranced by the mystic blues in Tanner’s paintings, a voice at my elbow gasped ‘look, they’re colored people. I wonder who painted them.’” When informed the painters were Negroes, the retort was, ‘Gee I didn’t know niggers could paint like that.’”⁴⁸ She went on to describe how people passed

by, some taking in the art, others just passing, and the observer was hopeful that people might look upon Negroes that they would pass with a greater sense of sympathy.

“I have heard many comments on both sides concerning Dr. DuBois’ speech at the YMCA, favorable and otherwise. Some Negroes as well as whites felt that he was too caustic in addressing such an audience; that he reminded the whites too often of their injustice to the Negro. To me, Dr. Dubois’ talk was a fitting close to the previous discussions of the week. The facts that he gave are some of the very facts that both groups need to know in order that they may work together intelligently.” Another observer also indicated that the community really was divided into two groups and programs like the achievement week might bridge the gaps. Mrs. J.S. Francis offered her view that “most of these speakers gave a good deal of attention to what is known as the Negro Renaissance, and talked at length of the growing group of young writers, particularly the poets.” It was “most interesting to the white people.”⁴⁹

While the actual impact of the Negro Achievement Week in Germantown in meeting its goal of uplift might be difficult to measure, the imagination captured by the events make this week in 1928 remarkable in Germantown’s history. The collection of top-drawer artistic and musical talent, intellectual firepower, and attempts at broad appeal with community tie-ins and wide-ranging institutional partnerships placed this event at the level of uniquely significant just by virtue of it being held. And even though it was not specifically about the subject of history, the message of understanding the

contributions of one group whose historic activities were not usually documented in public events made it significant.

The event is another example of how Germantown was, ironically, a place where progressive leadership and talent could be put to work. Like Jane Campbell, the Irish-Catholic suffragist who was also the Germantown Historical Society's historian, the people involved in Germantown's Negro Achievement Week pushed the community forward in ways that were not characteristically welcomed. It said a lot about the African-American community in Germantown, and of Germantown as a whole, that Negro Achievement Week would be held there. Unlike in Chicago, where the 1927 event was held downtown under the auspices of city-wide progressive groups and featured the symphony and the city's Art Institute, the Germantown achievement week was held, not in predominantly black Philadelphia neighborhoods like North Philadelphia or West Philadelphia, but in a neighborhood noted for its conservative institutions. Paradoxically, some of the very things that made Germantown seemingly conservative—its preponderance of churches, segregated institutions, a strong Quaker influence, many nativist organizations—were also some of the things that allowed for the community's leadership, including its bankers and the Friends school, to work together to attract such notable speakers.

The Germantown African-American community accomplished enough in its growth in the six decades since the Civil War (when the population had grown so quickly

among African Americans), that its elite could convince leaders both locally and nationally that Germantown was a place where the message of uplift would land on fertile ground. Certainly the long legacy of social service agencies, including innovative educational approaches, was part of the Negro Achievement Week, as shown in the involvement of Germantown Friends School.

It is not clear if the 1688 Germantown Protest or anything else pertaining to local history were among the notable papers and documents that had been on exhibition, given that it was written as it was by white Germantown Quakers and Mennonites, so it is not likely that Germantown's place in history was part of the reasoning for the event. Nor was it clear that in any way the Germantown history of the Battle or the founding had any mention whatsoever in the proceedings of the Negro Achievement Week. The involvement of institutions like the Germantown Friends School and Cheney College, though, along with leading black activists, committing to the Germantown event would suggest that there was concern for Germantown. A neighborhood where nativist groups and the KKK could exist in the same place, though largely separate from, a large and growing African-American community propelled the organizers to produce the event on the belief that it could foster greater cooperation. It was the kind of liberal approach to race relations that was relatively successful in the 1920s but would be seen as inconsequential by a subsequent generation of Germantown's black activists in the 1960s.

The fact that the YMCA and the YWCA took the initiative to produce the Negro Achievement Week indicated the degree to which that social relief agency had a progressive, integrationist approach born of a national vision for its organization's work in American cities. It also indicated the ways that a professionally-led organization, acting in the interests of its community for agreed-upon community needs, could affect a difference through leadership encouraged at all levels of the organization. These were elements not in evidence with the established Germantown historical community.

Curiously the event has been little remembered.⁵⁰ Like other week-long celebrations promoting an understanding of the past and of contributions to the present, this one involved various institutions across education, social service, religious, and business sectors of the community. And like the previous year's 150th anniversary of the battle of Germantown, "Negro Achievement Week" attempted to bring the community together in a coordinated way, with lots of promotion and commercial tie-ins.⁵¹ But quite unlike anything before or since in Germantown, Negro Achievement Week, April 15-22, 1928 reached beyond the usual narrow community focus to reach toward a larger understanding of what had not been discussed at any community level, one which forced participating organizations to consider their roles in something larger than a celebration of Germantown, namely a consideration of another race. The importance of this event transcends even the ambition of the program or the merits of its execution.

Whatever the case, Germantown achieved a level of accomplishment in one week in 1928 that should have provided a model for cooperation and goodwill in a community that was still very segregated on class and ethnic lines. Negro Achievement Week was a successful approach for the thinking of the time. As such it reveals more to Germantown than the history community was willing to present, indicated, like the WPA description of the neighborhood a few years later, that there was more to the present of Germantown than simply the colonial past. An overriding reason why Negro Achievement Week took place where it did and when it did, is that the social service sector of Germantown had the tremendous ability to put on an event that mattered.

It is easy to see its relative anonymity in the annals of Germantown history as a condemnation of the Germantown Historical Society. If 1854 town hall did not fit in to the Colonial Revival worldview, then certainly there was likely to be little place for African American art on Germantown Avenue. And if there were nativist groups among the many different heritage organizations, then events in support of the neighborhood's sizable black population would be a challenging addition to such celebrations. Yet even the staid Women's Club of Germantown offered its members a program tie-in about the Negro contributions to literature.

The lack of attention to it explains less about the people of Germantown who ignored it and more about the high level contradiction at work in Germantown's community. It was difficult to make sense of such an event at odds with so much of what

Germantown's press, history and business communities understood about itself. The event and its anonymity likewise revealed a depth to Germantown among the African-American community much earlier than it is given credit for, a depth revealed not only in the Achievement Week, but also in the continual work of the YMCA and YWCA to bring to a level of human understanding the changes that were taking place in Germantown.

As important a program as Negro Achievement Week was, however, it was not repeated. The events of the 1928 revealed not only significant demographic shifts in the census, but also economic and social transformations that signaled even more changes, such as in employment and residential patterns and loss of manufacturing. The events of the 1930s and 1940s would put race relations in a less positive light because of economic downturns, competition for jobs, and housing discrimination. In many ways the event reveals the living breathing changing city section, no part of which could be preserved in isolation.

Civic Celebrations in the Depression

Negro Achievement Week showed the ability of one group to bring many others together to explore history, art and culture, and also that there was interest in heritage beyond that of colonial descendents. This would become clearer in the 1930s. The decade saw Germantown continue to try to capitalize on its history. The celebrations of the anniversaries of its founding in 1933 and of the Battle of Germantown in 1937

marked still more festivities. The festivals of the 1930s saw some similarities with earlier versions, but key differences revealed divisions at work among the various heritage groups in Germantown. Heritage continued to be considered an essential feature of Germantown, with local papers still printing regular columns on neighborhood history; the Germantown High School sports teams were still known as “The Clivedens” until 1942.⁵² How different, and at time competing, versions of heritage would be used, however, is the focus here.

One of the highlights of the Depression-era history activities was the publication of a new book on Germantown history, written by Edward Hocker, librarian of the Germantown Historical Society. The book represented a departure from the model of a house-by-house description of places and lore that had characterized earlier books by Hotchkins, Keyser, Jenkins, and others. In his role as long-time librarian, Hocker provided considerable support to scores of genealogical researchers by supplying scrapbooks of news clippings and advertisements going back many decades. Hocker’s 1933 book described the history of Germantown through the history of its many groups, associations and clubs, and even long-disappeared old neighborhoods within Germantown.⁵³ Hocker’s book captured a deep sense of the community in 1933 as it was, namely a collection of many different approaches to history, social service and community organizing.

Nowhere were the multiple facets of Germantown's approach more in evidence than in 1933's anniversary celebrations, since the planning for the 250th involved two different approaches to the anniversary of the first German settlement in America. The cleavage shown in these many festivals represented at best a great wealth of interest in the community's heritage. But it also showed the lack of coordinated leadership, and the degree to which very different agendas would attempt to incorporate Germantown's history. The festivals ultimately showed how the lack of coordination could prevent Germantown from capitalizing on its heritage for economic gain.

As had occurred in 1908, the German-American groups had a different agenda for the 1933 festivities than had the Germantown history community. The former group wanted to adhere to the October 6 date to celebrate German-American Day, the anniversary of the arrival of Pastorius and his group of settlers in Philadelphia in 1683. Germantown, however, wanted to celebrate October 24, 1683 as the day that the settlement that became Germantown was laid out by Thomas Fairman, surveyor for the proprietary government. So in 1933 there were two festivals, each with parades, only a couple of weeks apart: one to celebrate German immigration (featuring the German Society in the lead) and one to celebrate Germantown's colonial period (led by the Germantown Historical Society). Unlike in 1908, when Founders Week was celebrated by both groups, with the Germantown history community following the lead of the German-American community, 1933 saw even less formal cooperation. While the

Historical Society was represented at the October 6 parade, it was not a lead organization. Likewise, in late October, the German Society had a prominent mention in the second program, but it was held under the auspices of the Historical Society.⁵⁴ This must have been very confusing to people, particularly since the festivals were very different.

The first of the 250th anniversary celebrations on October 6 was celebrated by an enormous crowd in Germantown's Vernon Park in what was called, once again, "Founders Day." The event generated controversy. An estimated 15,000 people attended, along with an impressive array of local, national and international officials in attendance. As one newspaper reported, "German societies did themselves proud on Saturday in the big parade and ceremonies at the Pastorius Monument in Vernon Park. Thousands saw the parade along Germantown Avenue to Rittenhouse Street and it was the best seen in this section for a long time. Mayor Moore, Congressman Darrow, William Emhardt (a member of a German descendent group as well as the head of the Germantown and Chestnut Hill Improvement Association) and Dr. S. Foster Damon, a direct descendant of Pastorius spoke."⁵⁵ The German ambassador, Dr. Hans Luther, attended the festivities and cablegrams from the new president and chancellor of Germany, Paul von Hindenburg and Adolf Hitler, were read to the crowd.⁵⁶

For a celebration of the founding of the first permanent settlement of Germans in America, this was indeed a banner day. Even the Black YMCA, known as the "Rittenhouse Street Branch," held an open house that day with music, games and tours.⁵⁷

The controversy occurred when Hans Luther, the German ambassador was supposed to give public remarks. Ambassador Luther, however, refused to do so because there was no Nazi German flag flying among the other flags. He took offense at the fact that the Nazi swastika was not flown in Vernon Park and his remarks were read by one of the officials.⁵⁸ The episode underscored the fact that history did not offer a refuge from the present. It brought up the tension that existed whenever Germantowners used the past to cling to their sense of independence, even if it only meant a ceremonial separation from outsiders like the Nazi ambassador. The 1933 festival showed that the neighborhood's history lent itself to national but also international interpretations which could exist beyond the control of the local heritage groups.

Conversely, the Historical Society held its own celebration later that month. Billed as a "community festival", it was a series of meetings, lectures, and house tours aimed at the members of historical societies throughout the eastern portion of Pennsylvania.⁵⁹ Rather than a parade through the commercial district of the community, Society members would be given a bus tour of the historic houses (most of them were still owned privately) and brief presentations at each of them. There was an exhibition of original deeds and documents at the museum of the Germantown Historical Society and an open house was offered at many of the houses. On the second day, a Saturday, at three of the public sites there was what was described as a "tableaux", namely a living history presentation of some historic content. Some of the presentations involved groups

from beyond the historical society, such as a Germantown High School history class presentation at the Concord Schoolhouse in honor of Pastorius (who was once a schoolteacher), or the YWCA presentation at the Harker House on Market Square (which was the site of one of their residence halls).

For a “community festival” the Society’s definition of community was limited to the understanding of the colonial and revolutionary heritage than had been the case early in the month. Sunday’s third day of events involved church services and German-themed hymns at the Germantown Academy. The Society, in its attempt to hold sacred specific dates for narrow focus for a limited audience, produced an event that, when compared to the Founders Day two weeks earlier, or to Negro Achievement Week five years earlier, amounted to parsing and hair-splitting to further its agenda as the steward of colonial and revolutionary history in Germantown. It defined the heritage and identity of the community so narrowly that it was evident that it was growing apart from it.

There would continue to be festival celebrations in Germantown throughout the century, but another one from the 1930s is especially revealing. The 1937 Germantown Progress Celebration, borrowing from Chicago’s 1933 “Century of Progress” world’s fair, used the model of a week-long festival and incorporated a much wider variety of events involving business and industry than the typical history festival. It was held between October 2 and October 9, and billed as “A Gala Program Rich in Patriotic,

Historical and Industrial Interest!” The pageant included a new feature, as scheduled visits to industrial plants were worked into the week’s events.⁶⁰

The anniversary led off with “Business and Industry Day,” which included a parade, a rodeo, and a concert, as well as free bus transportation to see the “inside operations of many Germantown factories” open that day. The next day, Sunday was “Church Day” and representation of Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish speakers and services. “Historical Day” coincided with the October 4 anniversary of the Battle of Germantown, and included colonial demonstrations and exhibitions at ten historic houses, including weaving at Wyck and a spelling bee at the Concord School. October 5th was “Constitution Day,” and the following day was “Institution Day,” devoted to visiting various Germantown social welfare institutions, listing seventeen of them, including all four branches of the Y, the hospital and the home for Hebrew Youth. Fraternal Day followed with an evening parade. Youth and Schools Day offered opened house tours, art exhibitions and displays were available and included the dedication of a new school. The final day of the progress celebration was “Patriotic Day,” and included military parades and concerts. Held under the auspices of the Germantown Progress Celebration Central Committee, its leadership was made up of business and civic group leaders, chaired by William Emhardt, director of the Germantown and Chestnut Hill Improvement Association. Emhardt had been involved with Founders Day in 1933 and served on

boards of several veterans' organizations. The event was new in how it spotlighted so many of the different organizations of Germantown.

Interestingly, nowhere in any of the material related to the events of the week, not even on historical day or patriotic day, was there a single mention of the Germantown Historical Society. The reasons could have been the result of personality differences or the fact that Germantown was a small town with many organizations approaching the needs of the community in different ways. However, these variations were beginning to harden into institutional differences that would work at cross-purposes with increasingly hostile approaches.

Nor was this lack of cohesion lost on Germantowners. Concern over the lack of coordination among all the organizations led to the creation of the Germantown Community Council (GCC) in 1934, whose motto became "Unity in the Community." The council was formed to be a "clearinghouse for dates for community activities and a place where community service agencies could exchange information."⁶¹ Concern over a lack of coordination among the large number of organizations motivated the founding, and GCC remained an organization of organizations. Initially there were fifteen organizational members, growing to over one hundred in the late 1940s. During the late 1930s and 1940s GCC restored the historic "Vernon House" and used it for its meetings. It sponsored events to promote community spirit, starting the Germantown Week, which ran from 1948-1961. It hired its first paid director, Marguerite Riegel, a former board

member of the YWCA, in 1946. As the neighborhood's changes accelerated, it then concerned its work with housing, zoning, and redevelopment.

Regional and National Professional Preservation Initiatives in Germantown

It is important now to look at the wider field of historic preservation during the period of the 1920s and 1930s. The YMCA and YWCA provided examples of the impact of professional staff working under direction from a national office could have on work in Germantown with Negro Achievement Week. Other professional approaches to work in Germantown history were beginning to appear, specifically in the field of historic preservation. Often architectural work did not show highly visible results, but the efforts of professional preservationists helped to sustain much of Germantown's historic architecture, lending it stability that the periodic festivals or one-time heritage programs did not.

The work of professionals more generally, moreover, represented a new chapter in the strand of Germantown's narrative that represented progress. Like other newcomers to Germantown, the work of professionals, whether social workers or preservation architects emphasized hope. As Maggie Kuhn said of her work in Germantown in 1930, "One of the things I valued most about the YWCA was its belief in the ability of groups to empower the individual and to change society."⁶² Embracing the idea of change may

have been unique to visionary social workers like Kuhn, but architects brought their own eagerness to Germantown in the 1930s.

The work of the historic preservation profession was relatively slow in coming when compared to the business and social service sectors. As Charles E. Peterson, architect of the Independence National Historic Park, observed, architectural surveys were relatively recent activities, with only isolated instances of them until the late 1890s and early twentieth century.⁶³ This began to change in the mid-1930s, courtesy of a government program to employ architects and writers in the service of historic preservation and documentation, known as the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS). The HABS program had Philadelphia roots and some of its earliest work was in Germantown. During this period, the role of professionals in the history field would begin to grow in Germantown, primarily in the realm of architectural documentation and restoration.

The use of professional architects in historical surveys received new impetus during the Great Depression when the federal government put architects to work on historical surveys, documentation and an inventory of records related to specific historic structures. The effort was led by Leicester Holland, who secured the sponsorship of the National Park Service, and was modeled on the survey work of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA) in the 1920s and a collection of

drawings commissioned in New York City, both efforts that the Society for the Preservation of Philadelphia Landmarks had earlier attempted to emulate.⁶⁴

Landmarks, led by its founder, Frances Anne Wister, had initiated the movement toward a fuller collection of architectural records in 1928 and 1929, in what had been known as “The Old Philadelphia Survey.” With the largest concentration of historic structures of any city in the country, Philadelphia received considerable attention, particularly as the historic buildings in the Old City section of downtown Philadelphia were threatened with new construction. The effort had limited success, losing steam with the economic downturn caused by the stock market crash of 1929.⁶⁵ The survey represented an interesting link between the privately funded work of preservation and that of government support for history.

Work on surveying architectural buildings gained momentum during the Roosevelt Administration under the early efforts of the New Deal known as the “Civil Works Administration” under the coordination of Harry L. Hopkins. This department was charged with employing architects, a sector of the economy hit extra hard during the lean years of the Great Depression. Leicester Holland was a Philadelphia architect and scholar working in Washington who had worked with the American Institute of Architects on documenting Philadelphia architecture earlier. By the end of 1933, the work of the HABS architects began employing a wide ranging approach to capturing the historical authenticity of the architecture. As Peterson noted, the program also built the

skills of architects, and laid a more solid foundation for the work of historic preservation.⁶⁶

Where the HABS efforts began in earnest was not near the historic areas of Independence Hall or Society Hill, but Germantown. As Peterson wrote, “Philadelphia work began at once in the Germantown area.” In fact, the first dozen sites in the original HABS drawings were Germantown structures.⁶⁷ That Germantown was first seemed fitting, for it was John Fanning Watson whose work had established thinking in Philadelphia by which historic houses were considered heroes, sacred totems worthy of studying and saving.

Two of the earliest outcomes of this approach were seen in Germantown, notably at Grumblethorpe and Vernon House which were both subjects of restorations. Vernon was restored by the Germantown Central Council in the early 1930s, upon the vacancy left by the Site and Relic Society in 1927 and prior to the GCC’s move into the building for community use in 1934.⁶⁸ Grumblethorpe, the 1744 Wister home, would be stripped of the Colonial Revival trappings that had adorned it since the 1870 remodeling in order to restore the German-Dutch architecture of the original house. The work on this project began in 1943, with the restoration of marble interiors.⁶⁹ Ultimately it would be restored to its original Dutch-German style by Germantown architect George C. Johnson in the 1950s.

Grumblethorpe had been brought forth through the work of Frances Anne Wister, a society lady, president of the Philadelphia Civic Club, Colonial Dame, and long-time member of the Germantown Site and Relic Society, among other descendent groups. Wister had pushed for the architectural survey of historic homes in Center City. She was a descendent of the Wister family, whose historic homes dot Germantown from Belfield on the LaSalle campus, to Vernon House and Grumblethorpe on Germantown Avenue.

Even though she was not herself a historian or an architect, Wister marshaled various civic groups into preservation projects. When the 1798 Germantown house, Upsala, burned to the ground in 1940, it was Wister and Landmarks which gathered the funds to restore the building and prevent it from turning into a grocery store on Germantown Avenue. Wister's efforts testified to the ability of civic groups to work with the government as well as private interests to bring the necessary expertise to bear on preservation, and the work of Landmarks included saving historic houses in Fairmount Park and the Powell House in Center City.⁷⁰ Even though it was guided by scholars and society ladies, during the 1930s and 1940s Philadelphia's local preservation did occasionally take on a more populist approach when coupled with government support.

The role of the government in preserving American architecture was growing under the auspices of the United States government during the 1930s and 1940s. Under the Roosevelt Administration, the charge of the National Park Service came to include history, as the stewardship of historic battlefields came under the auspices of the National

Park Service as part of its vested interest in promoting the symbols of American strength and stability. This meant that the federal government became more involved in historic site management, bringing greater focus on the historical treasures of American history, and building on the work of HABS.⁷¹ The 1935 Historic Sites Act put the park service in the front line of preservation activity. The Interior Department expanded the meaning of national treasure to include historic sites as well as landscapes. Ultimately the movement would require such specificity in management that it spawned the creation of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1949, which for three decades remained a federal agency. Both the National Park Service and the National Trust would be brought into greater visibility in the eastern United States, including in Germantown.

The National Park Service assumed control of Independence Hall in 1948. By a stroke of family fortunes, it became the steward of the Deshler-Morris House, often referred to as the “Germantown White House.”⁷² The house had been built in 1772 for David Deshler, a prominent Philadelphia merchant. The house was used by British General Howe for his headquarters after the Battle of Germantown. In 1793, during the Yellow Fever epidemic in Philadelphia, President George Washington used the house as his official residence. His entire household came with him, including his enslaved Africans, among them Hercules and Oney Judge. Cabinet meetings were held in the spacious house and several members of the cabinet also found rooms in Germantown, away from the deathly illness in Center City. According to lore, Washington was

enamored enough of Germantown to return with his household the following summer, such as attending church at Market Square's Episcopal Church.

The house was donated to the National Park Service by the heirs of Marriott Morris in 1948. There were birth pangs at the delivery of the private Deshler Morris house to the status of a public museum. According to Park historian Constance Greiff, the National Park Service was "reluctant to accept the donation due to a shortage of funds."⁷³ Observers at the time considered it to be one of an overabundance of memorials to George Washington. Philadelphia's congressional delegation, however, insisted, and the federal appropriations bill of 1949 included funds for the Deshler-Morris House, so the National Park Service had little choice.

The house was renovated and opened to the public in 1950, but the park service could provide no staffing for tours. A cooperative agreement was arranged with the Germantown Historical Society, whereby it would administer public tours and even furnish the Deshler Morris House. Its presence reaffirmed the Society's role in colonial heritage of Germantown. And even if the investment in it by the National Park Service was not entirely sustaining, the belief grew that the Deshler-Morris would help revive Germantown's flagging economic fortunes. Leighton Stradley, president of the Germantown Historical Society, wrote that the involvement of the National Park Service was a sign that history can be used as a spark for redevelopment.⁷⁴ And his belief led to his role as the first manager of the Deshler-Morris House as a result of the agreement

between the park service and the historical society.⁷⁵ Stradley's role with the house would be an example of how the historical society came to grasping for history to spark economic renewal.

By the end of the 1940s, Germantown came to feel the brunt of the economic decline of the region after World War II. As the last vestige of Germantown's economic strength, its retail corridor, began to decline in 1940s, certain business and Historical Society leaders took it upon themselves to craft a use of Germantown's historic identity for economic impact, and by using methods that were most decidedly not directed toward unity in the community. Emboldened by the presence of the federal government in the form of the National Park Service's investment in the Deshler-Morris house, the Germantown Historical Society attempted to reassert control over the historic identity of the neighborhood. The Historical Society was not as involved in community building as other sectors of the community had been, even though most of them, like the YWCA or the business association, saw Germantown's history as an asset in developing a community identity. Although in its activities of the 1930s Germantown Historical Society had been increasingly out of touch from other sectors of the community, after World War II it became increasingly strident in its efforts to impose its colonial version of the past. It found as a great model the work of professionals in the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg. But instead of bringing greater professional guidance into the daily work of historic preservation in Germantown, the Historical Society applied many

of the wrong lessons from professionalism in preservation. As a result, the fragmentation of Germantown's public history became even worse.

The Colonial Williamsburg Effect in Germantown: The Market Square Project

No project has revealed more the fragmented features of Germantown history than the attempt to create an idealized colonial attraction in Market Square. The Market Square project, which began in 1946, loomed so large that its various iterations will be explored in subsequent chapters. The attempt by the Germantown Historical Society to create in the square a smaller version of the Rockefeller-funded Williamsburg for the purposes of heritage tourism began in 1946. It involved a conflation of history, economics, and legend to such an extent that the effects remain.

The Rockefeller contributions to historic preservation have been well-documented, particularly in the histories of Colonial Williamsburg.⁷⁶ The impetus of newly rich entrepreneurs like Henry Ford to take up the ethos of Colonial Revivalism and show their connections to America's founding principles have been covered by several historians. In the case of the Rockefellers, particularly John D. Rockefeller, Jr., several issues also motivated their desire for the restoration of Williamsburg as a destination, not the least of which was the need for the family's wealth to be seen in a more positive light in the aftermath of the Ludlow disaster, where striking miners had been murdered at a

Rockefeller property. This prompted Junior (as the younger Rockefeller was commonly known) to redouble the enormous philanthropy of his father but in more public gestures.⁷⁷

Having visited the College of William and Mary in 1925, Junior was prevailed upon by the persuasive Rev. Dr. Goodwin, the chancellor of the college, to consider investing in the restoration of Williamsburg, Virginia's colonial capital until 1774. The restoration and preservation efforts involved millions of dollars of investment by Rockefeller, mostly in the form of buying the property on which it would be built—something which Junior agreed to only on the condition that the restoration project be built on a business model of sustainable income. In other words, Williamsburg was meant not only to revere the past, but to make money doing so.⁷⁸ With this backing, Colonial Williamsburg set out on a dual track of authentic restoration that could be sold in reproductions or to tourists. In so doing, the glory of the colonial era could be appreciated, as accurately as possible, by twentieth-century consumers. This model would loom large, as would the other aspect of Williamsburg, namely the destruction of nineteenth century Victorian buildings to allow the rebuilding of the long-lost colonial capital.

As histories of Williamsburg have shown, the dual thrust of the Colonial Williamsburg's mission meant that Rockefeller's initial investment in restoring Williamsburg, it was hoped, would launch an enterprise that would outgrow the need for philanthropic support by generating income on authentic reproductions of colonial crafts

and from tourists interested in reliving an authentic colonial experience.⁷⁹ Historical accuracy was given high priority, based on John Rockefeller Jr.'s interest in the recreation of Virginia's colonial capital. "No scholar must ever be able to come to us and say we have made a mistake," Rockefeller told his subordinates on the project.⁸⁰

In Germantown, the effort to create out of Market Square a colonial tourist attraction emphasized economic impact more than historical accuracy. In fact, the authenticity of Germantown was considered narrowly. The Germantown Historical Society prioritized the colonial and revolutionary stories; later periods were only minimally considered and little scholarship was brought to bear on the historic preservation work in Germantown with the notable exception of the HABS work.⁸¹

Meanwhile, the economics of Williamsburg were quite different from Germantown. While the Virginia town had been dormant since it was no longer the state capital after 1774, Germantown was an active part of a major American city. The desire to make money off an authentic past would motivate two generations of Germantown historic stewards, as efforts by Society grew to try to recreate "a miniature Williamsburg" out of Market Square.⁸² This desire was based on the long-held faith in Germantown's claim to authenticity and historic significance, but also on the fact that, as its economic fortunes declined, Germantown's investment community looked for new industries to support the flagging local economy. And if one community in Virginia could be successful at building an idealized version of the past, then certainly leaders of the

Germantown Historical Society believed so could it. The Society's plans to "restore" Market Square to a colonial condition, which would involve moving a Civil War Monument, were publicly unveiled in the very first issue of the Germantown Historical Society's magazine, "The Germantown *Crier*" in January 1949.

Since the 1920s, a tale of the Rockefeller's family interest in preserving Germantown has persisted in a lively manner. It seems that no matter what the audience, there are people in Philadelphia from all backgrounds and all professions who still believe in what can best be called the "Rockefeller Legend." Eighty years after Williamsburg's founding, this author is reminded of the legend nearly every week, including by historic preservation professionals, so the tenacity of the legend's persistence is considerable. Although David Contosta's 1996 study showed that there was hardly any interest by the Rockefeller family in preserving or restoring the Germantown section of Philadelphia, the notion comes up repeatedly, well into the twenty-first century.⁸³ While the facts supporting Rockefeller family involvement in Germantown are not to be found, the role of the family's creating and backing Colonial Williamsburg, the signature achievement in the family's interest in historic preservation, did indeed have a large impact on Germantown.

The reasons for the persistence of the legend are important to consider, for they show Germantown's culture of melancholic nostalgia. Even the question of whether the Rockefeller "role" in Germantown is a legend or a myth is an important part of

Germantown's twentieth-century culture and should be explored. The kernels of truth for the tale lie in three areas. First is the fact that one of the Rockefeller family's ancestral homesteads was in Germantown, New York, and efforts to preserve an eighteenth-century tavern there in the early 1900s involved the Rockefellers.⁸⁴ This meant that the Rockefellers had been involved in preserving buildings in *a* Germantown. Second, Nelson Rockefeller's first wife, Mary Todhunter Clark, was born in Germantown in 1907, growing up in the Philadelphia suburb, Bala-Cynwyd. They were married in 1930, so the name was mentioned in the Philadelphia society pages during the 1930s, in addition to the front page where the Rockefellers' activities in art, real estate development, or philanthropy were frequent news items during the period.⁸⁵ Lastly there was some contact, described by Contosta as "scanty correspondence," between the Germantown Historical Society and Williamsburg under the Rockefellers. Initial and isolated contact was made between curators at Williamsburg and the Historical Society regarding information about the colonial period that the society's records that might assist Williamsburg's director, Rev. Dr. Goodwin, in his research. The second contact was a later request by the Germantown Historical Society for the Rockefellers to provide a monetary loan for it to preserve the Gilbert Stuart studio, which went unanswered by the Rockefeller Foundation.⁸⁶ None of these isolated instances added up to actual interest by the Rockefellers in investing in Germantown.

The Rockefeller Myth goes to the heart of the cultural aspects of the Germantown Problem. A legend lies in stories that cannot be verified, but a myth is a group explanation for its existence, a popular belief or tradition that has grown up around something or someone, particularly one embodying the ideals and institutions of a society or segment of society. The fact that Germantown has long feared that it had not truly capitalized on its rich history for the economic well-being of the neighborhood meant that the failure to attract the Rockefellers contributed to how the community already saw itself. The myth's prevalence corresponds exactly to the time when Germantowners were coping with economic decline, as the neighborhood went from a residential suburb to an inner city ghetto with stunning rapidity. The wishful thinking behind the Rockefeller Myth likewise informed well-meaning volunteers and historical enthusiasts, supplying the historic tradition in its late stages with the bitterness of nostalgia and "if only" formulations. As Contosta recounted, the Rockefeller Myth cut in two ways: it empowered people with a sense of Germantown's authenticity and significance, but it also damned the leadership of the community for having missed its opportunity "to make Germantown Williamsburg before there was Williamsburg."⁸⁷ In fact, without any truth to the connection, the fact that the Germantown Historical Society aspired to such contact with national saviors like the Rockefellers provides one of the key explanations for how and why it went about nearly destroying the community into order to save Market Square.

Beginning in 1946, the Germantown Historical Society began the first of several attempts craft in Germantown a historic preservation project along the model of Williamsburg. Leighton Stradley, an attorney, was the president of the Germantown Historical Society.⁸⁸ His efforts tried to revive Germantown's commercial corridor by enhancing the arrival of the National Park Service by restoring Market Square, which stands across Germantown Avenue from the Deshler Morris House. "The Germantown Historical Society is planning to submit to the citizens of Germantown a project for the restoration of Market Square as it was in colonial times, somewhat according to the Williamsburg formula," Stradley wrote to a minister of the Market Square Presbyterian Church.⁸⁹

The restoration would involve radically altering the current look of the square in order to recreate it as a colonial town square, including having to re-craft a remodeled church. The square itself is roughly the length of a small city block, but offset from Germantown Avenue and surrounded by several office buildings and a church. While the square had served some of the functions of a market square in the middle of the eighteenth-century, Germantown's linear development, with one main street and few intersections, meant that there was really no one great square in Germantown, with the exception of Vernon Park. Market Square was the scene of the British lines and intense fighting during the 1777 battle, but it was most known to the community as the site of its grand Civil War Memorial, a statue with trees installed in the middle of the square in the

late nineteenth century. The proposed removal of the Civil War Monument provided a final example of confused identity regarding history, as it set the Germantown Historical Society on a course against its own role in preserving public memory.

The attempt to restore Market Square would go on through several decades, players, and iterations. But its early years, from 1946 to 1949, sum up the period of greatest upheaval in Germantown's quest for identity and prove that a section of a living breathing city neighborhood could not be hermetically sealed off and preserved. The idea for restoration of the square was formally engaged in summer 1948, when Stradley wrote to property owners on the square to inform them of the plans. One of the plan's adherents was Arthur Rosenlund, whose insurance company planned to move its office into the square and restore the Fromberger House, an eighteenth-century building that had been altered several times over the years. This would take advantage of the National Park Service's investment in restoring the Dëshler-Morris House and attempt to capitalize on an interest in colonial tourism.⁹⁰

Soon an architect was hired from the firm of G. Edwin Brumbaugh. The Society formally announced its plans in first issue of the *Crier*, citing that Market Square "was associated with more memories and incidents of colonial and revolutionary times than almost any other spot in the country." The president's letter described how the historical society saw the restoration as an opportunity for the commercial impact of history, "somewhat according to what's been done at Colonial Williamsburg. We believe that our

plan of restoration appeals to the love of history not only on our part but to a growing interest in history, especially colonial history, by a large percentage of American people.”⁹¹ In subsequent issues, the project’s plan was presented with an artist’s rendering of what the square would look like gracing the cover of the *Crier’s* third issue. Such public pronouncement of the vision, however, immediately put the Society on the defensive about the plan, because it called for more changes in the historical landscape than Germantowners were willing to consider, including several from within the Society.

Removing the Civil War monument again raised the question of which history mattered in Germantown. When Stradley asked Society librarian (and Germantown’s most recently published historian) Edward Hocker to provide evidence of what Market Square would have looked like in colonial times, Hocker provided some references in various Society scrapbooks (including Watson’s), but then he shared his concerns explicitly:

Perhaps I have no business to go farther, but I wonder whether those who have from time to time proposed to ‘restore’ Market Square to its condition in colonial times realize that this would mean: cutting down all the fine trees, plowing up the sod and removing the coping, making the place a bare open lot with footpaths worn across it, obliterating the work to which several generations of the Morris family gave attention to beautify the square. This monument may be hideous according to modern taste, but the tablets bear the names of all Germantown’s Civil War soldiers and any attempt to tamper with it will arouse a storm among patriotic organizations.⁹²

In making reference to the care given the square by generations of the Morris family, whose home was about to be opened as a historic site of George Washington, he essentially encapsulated the idea that no one place can ever be frozen in time.

Meanwhile, Civil War descendant groups criticized the plan in terms that actually showed an understanding of how history had to make room for progress. William Emhardt of the Ellis Civil War Post and a leading Germantown merchant (as well as longtime head of the Avenue Improvement Association) described his anger over the plan in no uncertain terms, in letters both private and to newspapers, describing how the entire square was crafted as a monument to the Civil War, not just the marker. “The elms were brought from the Battlefield at Gettysburg and the oaks were all placed by interested individuals and named for them at a celebration at the time of planting.” He then went on sarcastically about the Society’s version of history. “This is history we must forget. Let us return to dirt roads and dirt pavements, pumps and privies and eliminate modern sanitary fixtures, City water, sewage and gas, electricity, telephones, refrigeration, mechanized offices and really be colonial. What a pipe dream and who is the author? Who suggested that people would come a long distance to look at the Commons of primitive Germantown?”⁹³ He also noted that any comparison to Williamsburg implied tremendous costs for the project, since the Rockefellers had invested over \$5 million in the Virginia project.

In a letter prepared for the editors of local papers, Stradley addressed the criticisms, but in a way that defined “historic” very narrowly:

It is true that Williamsburg costs have run into millions. In our case more than 80% of the restoration is assured without any cost at all except to the surrounding owners who have cheerfully joined in the project at their own expense.... As to the removal of the war memorials, there is nothing sacrosanct about the monument and its location on Market Square. The Square holds no special place in Civil War History and the monument could be placed to better advantage elsewhere. The plaque commemorating the Battle of Germantown could and should remain. The trees could also remain without the slightest change. Our sole purpose is to preserve the traditions and historical background of colonial Germantown. A removal of the monument that we advocate would not deteriorate in any way from their present position. As to commercialism, this is merely a catch phrase with no substance. There is no element of commercialism in our proposals. In fact no one in our organization has any personal motive. We are thinking only of Germantown and its best interests and we solicit a reasonable consideration of our proposals by all interested parties. There is no more commercialism in our proposal than there is at Williamsburg.⁹⁴

That an insurance firm’s plans were seen as a motivating factor for the project forced Stradley to address the commercial interests of the projects’ advocates, which he did in terms relating the project to its Williamsburg forerunner.

The Society’s bold attempt to create a colonial attraction made certain that what it considered historic was defined firmly as colonial, even though this raised considerable ire from a number of Civil War descendents. It raised the larger question of what restoring the past really meant, a question the Society could only address very specifically in terms of colonial history throughout the middle of the twentieth century. Rather than coordinating the overall history of the neighborhood, the Germantown

Historical Society contributed to the diffusion of the past, creating more factions and organizations, as it narrowed the sense of what history mattered in a centuries-old community. That the Society's leadership would consider destroying one place created for the public's historic memory of the Civil War in order to manufacture an idealized version of the colonial past typified the extent of imagination regarding history throughout most of the twentieth century. That it would continue to push for the Market Square project until 1976 only made the problems of Germantown's historic identity worse, to the detriment of "unity in the community."

The PTC Strike and its Effects: Germantown Avenue on Alert

That there continued to be a need for unity was clearly shown by the 1944 work stoppage by workers of the Philadelphia Transit Company (PTC). The 1944 strike by the union working for the PTC was one of a few racially-motivated incidents to occur during World War II in Philadelphia.

The strains of wartime pushed the Philadelphia economy to its brink with a labor shortage so severe that in some cases German prisoners of war were put to work. In summer 1944 leaders of the transit union refused to obey an order from the federal government's Fair Employment Practices Commission directing the transit union to hire blacks to work on buses and streetcars as motormen and conductors. This led to a strike by the union, and was unopposed by the transit company.⁹⁵ When workers refused to

return to their jobs, President Franklin Roosevelt ordered a detachment of federal troops to take charge. August 5, 1944 began a week of tension, as United States army soldiers accompanied buses and trolley cars to safeguard black motormen and conductors. This led to a scene, not uncommon in Philadelphia during the strike, of jeeps, equipped with fully-loaded machine guns, following the Number 23 trolley down Germantown Avenue to ensure no violence would occur. Protests among the African American community included pickets with signs with phrases like "We Drive Tanks, Why Not Trolleys?" A few riots took place in North Philadelphia, where protestors attacked shops that practiced discrimination against blacks. The strike ended ten days later with the union giving in to government demands.

For Germantown, the strike highlighted racial tensions. There was a 24-hour alert put on by Germantown's 14th district of the Philadelphia Police, with armed auxiliary officers stationed at each stop on the local commuter railroad lines in Germantown, Mt. Airy and Chestnut Hill. Germantown newspaper coverage faulted the union for losing control over the PTC workers and argued that "racial equality and tolerance cannot be legislated or imposed from outside" a community. The newspaper's Republican bent was also on display with the suggestion that President Roosevelt had provoked the strike in order to secure black votes in Philadelphia.⁹⁶

The spectacle of troops trained to fight Nazis coming to Philadelphia to help run the buses and trolleys would be a lasting impression on the city, leading to responses of

several sorts by the N.A.A.C.P. and African American leaders in the Democratic Party.⁹⁷ Liberal attempts to mediate the rift caused by the strike and divided climate took specific forms, such as the change in the city charter to eliminate discriminatory language in housing practices and the creation of a Human Relations Commission. For Germantown, the episode led to the Germantown Community Audit.

The work of the Philadelphia Civil Rights Commission commenced in 1949 and in Germantown this became work which was overseen by the Germantown Community Council. Ultimately the work stimulated by these efforts had some instances of successful mediation of in-migration of blacks into Germantown neighborhoods. For instance, “On Slocum St. in Germantown, the commission on human rights staff helped to form an integrated neighborhood committee after a new black family received a number of anonymous letters.”⁹⁸ The Germantown council spearheaded a survey and audit regarding “civil rights in Germantown by the citizens of Germantown” with 30 Germantown and Chestnut Hill organizations through the GCC conducting the survey, including churches, relief agencies, and even realtors.⁹⁹ The committee to oversee the survey answered to the GCC and included members of the YWCA and YMCA, several church and relief agencies, as well as individuals like Benton M. Spruance, the noted Depression-era painter and lithographer, who served as chair of the GCC’s human relations committee.

The survey was developed under the auspices of many national groups, like American Jewish Congress and Citizens Council on Democratic Rights, and was modeled on a similar neighborhood survey done in New York City. It was a long survey, and formidable in the sense that it required interviewers to have training. Sections pertaining to housing, family composition, and “additional questions on education to be asked of Negro respondents” were evident. Questions included “Do you think there are any public schools which do not accept Negro students, or which only accept a limited number of Negro students each year? In schools your children attend are there any clubs to which Negro children are not admitted or limited? Has any member of your family been refused admission to any private school or college in the Germantown area? “Are there any sections in Germantown where it is difficult or impossible for Negroes to buy or rent homes? Housing questions included conditions of the residence (though nothing about age). Are there any restaurants which will not serve Negroes? Are there any clubs or organizations that will not accept Negro membership?” Similar questions were formulated and refashioned regarding ethnic discrimination for Jewish respondents.

Surveys would result in a useful guide, called the “Germantown Community Audit,” to provide the Council guidance to committees regarding housing policy, zoning and planning, and human relations. The perception was one of a genteel white, Christian suburb, with a lot of small black enclaves and too many organizations where ethnic or religious groups stayed pretty much to themselves with little interaction, accept in the

Germantown retail business district.¹⁰⁰ The reality provided in the survey was much different and gave valuable insight to issues that arose, such as with the Slocum St. incident already mentioned. This was when the community was 10% and 13% African American, in the 1940 and 1950 census reports, respectively.¹⁰¹ These numbers would rise rapidly in the coming decades.

Benton Spruance was an interesting choice to lead this effort. He was the first person to find beauty in the aesthetic of Germantown's built environment without it being "quaint." His wife, Win, was a Democratic committee person in Germantown and "a close friend of staff members of Mayor Joe Clark's."¹⁰² It was not just political connections that made Spruance an important choice for this Community Audit and the work of forging greater community harmony in the late 1940s. An artist trained at Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, he was chair of the Art Department at nearby Beaver College until his death in 1968. He lived on Walnut Lane in Germantown and operated his studio on Germantown Avenue. According to one biographer, "Spruance's choice of subject matter during the 1930s left few areas of modern life untouched. The early conventional landscapes of his student years gave way to scenes of city life—crowded subways, apartment buildings, urban construction; busy street corners, and his Germantown neighborhood. He became absorbed with the human figure. He found subjects engaged in various everyday activities of work and play. Many works were also given over to the dynamics and perils of modern transportation. Autos in traffic jams,

trains rounding curves, crossed bridges.”¹⁰³ Spruance had treated the subject of urban blight in his community with a 1935 drawing called, *Visitor to Germantown*.¹⁰⁴ Pictured in it are three older buildings on Germantown Avenue, one on the left is derelict and for sale, the other two are unscathed, but in the doorway of the middle house sits a skeleton.

Spruance’s art blended easily with his work for Germantown Community Council. In his later work in the 1940s and 1950s, he depicted mystical and religious themes. He frequently painted what he called an eternal struggle—man against forces attempting to demean or destroy him—which became the single most dominant theme in his work. It was not just an interest but a duty and may have been informed by the forty years he lived in Germantown. “I do not think it sufficient to paint in innocent joy,” he remarked in a 1955 interview with a Germantown newspaper. “Whether you’re doing St. Francis or a face at the corner of Germantown and Chelton Avenues, the struggle between good and evil can be portrayed.”¹⁰⁵ For those who saw Germantown’s history and its struggles for greater unity, Spruance was an example of the kind of talented and creative professional involved working to overcome the legacy of separation that continued to plague Germantown. That he did so having rendered images of Germantown in a state of decline, not about what was historic or idealized, made him unique among community leaders.

Nor was Spruance the only artist in Germantown compelled to use creative work to bring attention to segregation. Marguerite de Angeli’s *Bright April* was a 1946

children's book that dealt with the subject. De Angeli, who lived in Germantown and nearby Montgomery County during the 1930s, among many other Philadelphia-area sites, wrote and illustrated the book. Her books typically explored historical themes, such as the problems of immigrant children and a couple of children's books on Quaker history and education. She won a Newberry Award for a different book in 1950. *Bright April* explored the prospect of discrimination in Germantown from the perspective of a child.¹⁰⁶ The use of language and realistic settings in the book was considered to be ahead of its time in dealing with the subject.¹⁰⁷ Many of the images in the book show Germantown street scenes with children walking down colorfully and realistically rendered streets filled with colonial architecture (the cover shows the integrated Brownie troop of girls exploring in the Wissahickon woods). Here too, in an area not directly dealing with history, was a creative example of using the neighborhood's features to consider some of the effects of changing demographic patterns. Nor were the efforts of de Angeli, or the YWCA, shy about the issue, they dealt with it head on.

These examples showed important elements of the acceptance of what was now Germantown in the 1930s and 1940s. First of all the Community Audit was the kind of approach to discrimination that black power activists would later call characteristic of liberal approaches, it was deliberative, reformist and slow—and it kept decision making about such issues largely in the hands of people linked to the Democratic party, and out of the hands of African Americans. The Community Audit, however, represented an

attempt to coordinate some of the groups and to gather input related to race relations in Germantown. Secondly, the fact that artists of the 1930s and 1940s were able to render the aesthetic of the built environment in Germantown with delicacy and realism indicated that the neighborhood need not be preserved and sealed off from the issues of contemporary life for it to be beautiful. All of this placed the Historical Society at a remove from these efforts, and as a group attempting to assert control in a situation that many others were attempting merely to grasp, not control. Germantown remained a community coping with change, whose sense of itself was going in many different directions, pointing to conflicts to come in subsequent years.

Conclusion

The period from the late 1920s to the late 1940s in Germantown can be seen as a triumph of the founding, colonial era history as a means of morale-building during a national crisis. Buildings like the Vernon Mansion, Grumblethorpe, and Upsala were saved by interested preservationists. Likewise, the emphasis placed on historic documentation and architectural surveys by the Historic American Buildings Survey was evidence of the belief, long held since Watson's time in the 1830s, that the buildings themselves were heroic.

Yet the period also saw the appearance of other approaches to history moving into Germantown's relationship with the past, approaches well outside the limits brought to it

by the Germantown Historical Society's focus on the colonial period. Some of the approaches came from within the community, as the growing African American population sought out social services among Germantown's service sector, which resulted in what was then called the Colored branch of the YWCA. In addition to sewing and swimming, the black branch of the Y offered courses and clubs related to African American history. The strength of their programs led to one of the first ever national Negro Achievement Weeks, not only a week devoted to arts, culture, and history, but a history-making event in its own right. In effect the efforts of the YWCA, in both its Inter-racial Committee and its Colored branch, represented a counterpoint to the Germantown Historical Society in the fact that the Y was professionally directed, with fundraising efforts reaching out to the entire community, and with programs that sought to establish for its membership as broad a context as possible for the sense of place in which it was bringing up its women members. The fact that their efforts were supported by some of the leading figures in the day, such as DuBois, Locke, and James Weldon Johnson indicated the breadth of their reach, and hints at the extent to which the memory infrastructure could have expanded had it been allowed to bring in more such voices.

Later, as the community's declining economic fortunes brought with it demographic changes that made the suburb more of a city section, the Y, working with the social service agencies and business sector, conducted surveys to gauge public comfort with the changes in order to inform its work. The Germantown Historical

Society was not as involved in community building as other institutions were, most of whom saw Germantown's history as an asset in developing a community identity, not a stage to be managed with one desired effect. Certainly racially charged incidents like the PTC Strike of 1944 showed how fragmented the identity was.

As new voices and approaches to history were coming into Germantown, slowly prodding the memory infrastructure, the Germantown Historical Society was not in the leadership role it assumed for itself. Indeed the presence of professionally trained architects from all over the city, region and nation in the HABS program brought surveys and documentation to the sites in a way that the descendant groups and volunteer-led celebrations could not. As the period from 1925 to 1949 showed, members of the whole community clearly desired ways for how history (whether American or African, colonial or Civil War) could inform their lives and make them better citizens in the present. Had the memory infrastructure been more adaptable to some of these desires, perhaps the subsequent decades could have seen a wider community approach to the crises of economic downturn and population loss. The 1950s and 1960s would show that Germantown's fragmentation was not resolved previously, and that it would grow to hamstring the community.

¹ Works Progress Administration (Federal Writers' Project) *Philadelphia: A Guide to the Nation's Birth Place* (Philadelphia: William Penn Association of Philadelphia, 1937): 474-475.

² “Old and New,” *Germantown Courier*, 27 July 1944.

³ David Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century* (University of North Carolina Press, 1990): 110-150.

⁴ On the Colonial Revival and the Sesquicentennial see Morris J. Vogel, *Cultural Connections. Museums and Libraries of the Delaware Valley* (Temple University Press, 1991): 131-157; and Steven Conn, *Museums in American Intellectual Life, 1876-1926* (University of Chicago Press, 1998): 238-244.

⁵ David Contosta, “Philadelphia’s Miniature Williamsburg,” in *Pennsylvania Magazine for History and Biography* 120 (1996): 290.

⁶ Vogel’s discussion of the Colonial Revival, including the movement of Sulgrave Manner, a 1926 replica of Washington’s ancestral home in Oxfordshire, England, to a residential street in Chestnut Hill, is explored in Vogel, *Cultural Connections*: 149-157.

⁷ See John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, 1992), 14.

⁸ *The Beehive: A Publication of the Germantown Businessmen’s Association*, “Published in the interests of the Business, Civic, Patriotic, and Historical Societies of Germantown.”: XVII: 3 (July 1930), 1-3.

⁹ For an excellent summary of the ethnic composition of Germantown during this period see Russell A. Kazal, *Becoming Old Stock: The Paradox of German American Identity* (Princeton University Press, 2004): 226-230.

¹⁰ Robert Gregg, *Sparks from the Anvil of Oppression: Philadelphia’s African Methodists and Southern Migrants, 1890-1940* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993): 13-14.

¹¹ Gregg, 14.

¹² Estimates come from the entire 22nd Ward (the entire Germantown Township) and are quoted by Gladys Taylor, executive director of the YWCA of Germantown, in “Experiences in neighborhood building through the YWCA,” May 16, 1949. Temple University Urban Archives, YWCA Germantown records, Box 24, Folder 27.

¹³ Kazal, 230-231. Philip Jenkins, *Hoods and Shirts: The Extreme Right in Pennsylvania, 1925-1950* (University of North Carolina Press, 1997): 72, 76. See also James Wolfinger, *Divided Philadelphia: Race and Politics in the City of Brotherly Love* (University of North Carolina Press, 2007): 187.

¹⁴ Kazal, 231.

¹⁵ Philip Jenkins, *Hoods and Shirts: The Extreme Right in Pennsylvania, 1925-1950* (University of North Carolina Press, 1997): 72, 76.

¹⁶ See for instance the reminiscence of Louetta Ray Hadley who described a cross burning by the KKK in her backyard in the Mt. Airy section of German Township. See “My Family and Community,” *Germantown Crier* (2002), also included in *Remembering Germantown: Sixty Years of the Germantown Crier*, Judith Callard and Irvin Miller eds. (Charleston, S.C., The History Press, 2008): 124-126. There are also articles clipped from unnamed newspapers, including, “Ku Klux Klan Starts Organization Here: Largely Attended Meetings Held in Old Odd Fellows’ Hall on Wister Street: No Hooded Parade Yet,” 1926; and “Another Klan Meeting,” which described a 1924 picnic at a Mt. Airy farm that drew an estimated 300 attendees. Germantown Historical Society, Subject File.

¹⁷ See, J. Gordon Baugh, Jr. *A Souvenir of Germantown—Issued during the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation at Philadelphia, PA. September 1913*. (Philadelphia: Baugh Press, 1913), Germantown Historical Society. There is a version annotated by Louise L. Strawbridge, with the assistance of John E. Jones, Jr., and reproduced in the *Germantown Crier* vol. 36, no. 1 (winter, 1983-84) and vol. 36, no. 2 (spring 1984); as well as Strawbridge’s collections of African American responses to her research, African American Pamphlet box, Germantown Historical Society.

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- ¹⁸ David Contosta, "Philadelphia's 'Miniature Williamsburg': The Colonial Revival and Germantown's Market Square," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*: 120 (October 1996): 285–290.
- ¹⁹ James Wolfinger, *Philadelphia Divided. Race and Politics in the City of Brotherly Love* (University of North Carolina Press, 2007).
- ²⁰ Wolfinger: 16-20.
- ²¹ *The Beehive*: XVII: 2 (March 1930): 19.
- ²² On this, see Wolfinger, *Divided Philadelphia*, 2 and 14–80. About the issue of cooperation in Philadelphia, see Jonathan Farnham, "A Bridge Game: Constructing a Co-operative Commonwealth in Philadelphia, 1900–1926" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 2000).
- ²³ "Mayor Would Stop Exodus to Suburbs; United Support of Transit Plans will do it he tells Germantown Businessmen, A Plea for the Avoidance of Sectionalism," *Philadelphia Bulletin*, April 17, 1928, p. 22.
- ²⁴ "Record Breaking Audiences Greet Achievement Week Orators; Germantown News," *Philadelphia Tribune*, April 26, 1928: 12.
- ²⁵ "Germantown Women Organize to Study Political Situation; Celebrate Achievement Week," *Philadelphia Tribune*, April 19, 1928, p. 12.
- ²⁶ "Colored Artists Show Their Work: Paintings, Manuscripts, and Rare Documents in Negro Achievement Work Exhibition, Ogden Chorus Heard." *Philadelphia Bulletin*, April 17, 1928. The article reads in part that "art and historical documents pertaining to the colored race are on exhibition this week in the auditorium of the free library, Vernon Park, Germantown" and described work of Tanner and Waring.
- ²⁷ Clarence Cameron White (1880-1960) was an Oberlin College-trained violinist and composer born in Tennessee. See Cary D. Wintz and Paul Finkelman, *The Encyclopedia of Harlem Renaissance* (Routledge, 2004): 1248.
- ²⁸ McNeill, "Negro Achievement Week Report," Temple University Urban Archives, YWCA Germantown Box 24, Folder 27 "Integration, 1928-1950."
- ²⁹ For the development of Woodson's reasoning, see C. G. Woodson, "The Celebration of Negro History Week, 1927," *The Journal of Negro History*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (Apr., 1927), pp. 103-109; and "Negro History Week-the Fourth Year" in *The Journal of Negro History*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (Apr., 1929), pp. 109-115.
- ³⁰ See Lisa Meyerowitz, "The 'Negro in Art Week': defining the 'New Negro' through art exhibition," in *The African American Studies Journal* 1997.
- ³¹ Locke, quoted in James Weldon Johnson, "Race Prejudice and the Negro Artist." *Harper's* 157 (1928): 669-76.
- ³² From Charles P. T. Banner-Haley's study of Philadelphia, *To Do Good and To Do Well: Middle-Class Blacks and the Depression, Philadelphia 1929-1941* (New York: Garland, 1993): 5-6. On this period, also see H. Viscount Nelson, *Black Leadership's Response to the Great Depression in Philadelphia* (Lewiston NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2006): 25-28.
- ³³ On Alain Locke, see Leonard Harris and Charles Molesworth, *Alain L. Locke: The Biography of a Philosopher* (University of Chicago Press, 2009). For perspective on DuBois's Philadelphia study, see Elijah Anderson, "Introduction" to W.E.B. DuBois, *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996).
- ³⁴ On Ishmael Locke, see David W. Young, "The South Jersey Influences on a Great African American," *Salem Sunbeam*, February 24, 2003.
- ³⁵ Meyerowitz, "The 'Negro in Art Week'," *The African American Studies Journal*, 1997.
- ³⁶ Program flyer for Negro Achievement Week, Temple Urban Archives, YWCA Germantown Box 24, Folder 27 "Integration, 1928-1950."

³⁷ From the report by Miss Beulah McNeill, one of the charter members of the inter-racial committee and a member of the Negro branch of the YWCA. “Negro Achievement Week Report,” Temple University Urban Archives, YWCA Germantown Box 24, Folder 27 “Integration, 1928-1950.”

³⁸ Maggie Kuhn (1905-1995), who became famous as a founder of the Gray Panthers senior citizens activist group, worked at the Germantown YWCA. Maggie Kuhn, Christina Long, Laura Quinn, *No Stone Unturned: The Life and Times of Maggie Kuhn* (Ballantine Books, 1991).

³⁹ Eva Bowles was born in Ohio. She attended both Ohio State University and Columbia University. She worked in New York after being appointed to direct a project for black women under the Young Women’s Christian Association. She moved back to Columbus in 1908 to become the first black caseworker in the Associated Charities of that city. After 5 years, she returned to New York to become the secretary of the subcommittee on colored work for The National Board of the YWCA. In 1917, she was appointed director of the Colored Work Committee of the Young Women’s Christian Association. She believed that the YWCA was “the pioneer in interracial experimentation.” Eva Bowles died in June 1943. On the level of professional leadership in the YWCA in Germantown, see Stephanie Yvette Felix, “Committed to their own: African American women leaders in the YWCA : the YWCA of Germantown, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1870-1970.” Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (Temple University, 1999), 78-80.

⁴⁰ From the program flyer, “Negro Achievement Week,” YWCA Germantown records, Box 24, Folder 27

⁴¹ For instance there had been programs involving speakers from Marcus Garvey’s Universal Negro Improvement Association in 1920 and a Pan-African Bazaar in 1920. See Felix, “Committed to their Own”, 127-129.

⁴² Philadelphia *Tribune*, March 1, 1928: 12.

⁴³ On the rifts between African Americans during the Great Migration in Philadelphia, see Banner-Haley: 6, 48-50; the subject is also covered in Gregg, *Sparks from the Anvil of Oppression*, 50-64.

⁴⁴ *The Beehive*, April 1928.

⁴⁵ Felix, “Committed to Their Own,” 99-100.

⁴⁶ “Negro Achievement Week in Germantown,” in *The Beehive*, Vol: XIII: 1 (April 1928): 1-2.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 17. Also see Shirley Turpin-Parham, “A History of Black Public Education in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 1864-1914” (Temple Ph.D. dissertation, 1986): 240-247.

⁴⁸ Quoted in McNeill, “Negro Achievement Week Report.”

⁴⁹ *Ibid*.

⁵⁰ The only references to it are in the local press of the time and very brief mentions (with incorrect placement of the date in March 1928) in the booklet by Lucy P. Carner, *YWCA The First 100 Years in Germantown 1870-1970* (Philadelphia 1970): 57, and Stephanie Yvette Felix, “Committed to Their Own : African American Women Leaders in the YWCA of Germantown, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1870-1970.” Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (Temple University, 1999): 128-129.

⁵¹ Program for Negro Achievement Week, in “Negro Achievement Week Report,” Temple University Urban Archives, YWCA Germantown Box 24, Folder 27 “Integration, 1928-1950.”

⁵² Germantown *Telegraph*, Nov 17, 1933: 4. The *Telegraph* also advertised the local history column by James F. Magee as one of the reasons to subscribe for \$1 per year.

⁵³ Edward W. Hocker, *Germantown, 1683-1933: The Record That a Pennsylvania Community has achieved in the Course of 250 Years. Being a History of the People of Germantown, Mt. Airy, and Chestnut Hill* (Philadelphia 1933), 309.

⁵⁴ Published program, “250th Anniversary of the Settlement of Germantown: Under the Auspices of the Germantown Historical Society, Germantown, Philadelphia, Pa.,” 1933. Germantown Historical Society.

⁵⁵ “Big Crowd See Germans Parade: German Ambassador Here but Makes No Address.” By George Edward Wallis, *Germantown Telegraph*, October 7, 1933; also see, “Thousands Parade in Honor of First

German Settlers: Celebration Marred by Failure to Hear German Ambassador Read Good-Will Message.” *Germantown Tribune*, October 12, 1933.

⁵⁶ “Hitler’s message read: ‘Upon the occasion of the 250th anniversary of the foundation of the first German settlement in North America, heartiest congratulations and wishes for further prosperous collaboration of German elements with American fellow-citizens and the blessing of the German Fatherland and the American nation.’” Printed in *Germantown Telegraph*, October 7, 1933.

⁵⁷ “West Rittenhouse Branch of the YMCA took part in Founders Day observances, with an Open House which featured games, music and general fellowship,” *Germantown Telegraph*, October 20, 1933, p. 5.

⁵⁸ Jenkins, *Hoods and Shirts*, 128.

⁵⁹ “Germantown Ready for Big Celebration: 250th anniversary of Town to be observed with extensive program” by Harry R. Whitcraft, *Germantown Telegraph* October 20, 1933; “All Ready for 3 Days’ Celebration: In Honor of Germantown’s 250th Anniversary Which Begins Friday,” *Germantown Telegraph* October 20, 1933; on the presence of other historical societies, see “Many PA. Societies accept Invitation to Join Celebration: Festivities Will Exteend from Oct. twentieth-22d; groups will include Penna-German Society,” *Germantown Tribune*, October 12, 1933.

⁶⁰ Program for the “Germantown Progress Celebration, 1691-1937.”

⁶¹ The council existed from 1934 to 1980. On the evolution of it, see the article by its former director, Francis X. Delany, “Germantown and its Civic Organizations 1946-1981: A Community in Search of Effective Form,” in *Germantown Crier* 52:1 (Spring 2002): 4-22; also see Bruce Jones, “Why a Community Council?” *Germantown Crier* 1:1 (January 1949): 15-16.

⁶² Sonia Weiss and Lorna Biddle Rinear, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Women's History* (Alpha Books, 2001): 325. See also Kuhn, *No Stone Unturned*.

⁶³ One of the isolated examples was the drawing of Wyck in 1824 at the outset of its rebuilding. Charles E. Peterson, “Historic American Building Survey—In and Out of Philadelphia,” in Richard Webster, *Philadelphia Preserved: Catalog of the Historic American Buildings Survey* (Temple University Press, 1981): xxv.

⁶⁴ On the influence of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA) in the development of HABS, see James M. Lindgren, “‘A Spirit that Fires the Imagination’: Historic Preservation and Cultural Regeneration in Virginia and New England, 1850-1950,” in *Giving Preservation a History*, Page and Mason eds. : 123-125.

⁶⁵ Peterson, “Historic American Building Survey,” xxix-xxxii.

⁶⁶ Peterson, “Historic American Building Survey,” xxxvi.

⁶⁷ The original buildings tended to be public buildings, buildings not included in the “Old Philadelphia Survey”, or private homes that owners allowed for architectural study, which usually took a few days. The original HABS buildings in Germantown were the Blair House (demolished in 1950), Vernon, Germantown Academy, Concord School, Grumblethorpe and the Grumblethorpe Tenant House, Johnson House, Jacob Keyser House, Mennonite Meeting House, RittenhouseTown, and Wyck. See Richard Webster, *Philadelphia Preserved: Catalog of the Historic American Buildings Survey* (Temple University Press, 1981): 245-281.

⁶⁸ On the restoration of Vernon, which was owned by the City of Philadelphia, see the records of the Germantown Community Council, URB 39: Series III Administrative Division: “Restoration of Vernon” in the Temple Urban Archives.

⁶⁹ “Grumblethorpe,” by G. Clarence Johnson, Architect for the Restoration, in *Germantown Crier*, March 1958: Vol 10: 7-8.

⁷⁰ See Charlene Mires, *Independence Hall in American Memory* (University of Pennsylvania Press): 189.

⁷¹ On this aspect of the National Park Service, see Peterson, xxxiii-xxxv.

⁷² On the Deshler Morris House see, Webster, *Philadelphia Preserved*, 264, and Margaret Tinkcom, 66-67.

⁷³ Constance Greiff, *Independence: The Creation of a National Park* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987): 74-75.

⁷⁴ Letter from Stradley to the Civil War Legion Post, 1805 Pine, October 21, 1948. Stradley Papers, GHS.

⁷⁵ On the relationship between GHS and the Deshler Morris at the outset of its inception as a National Park Service site, see Alexis C. Stephens, "A Study and Interpretation of the Deshler-Morris Landscape in Historic Germantown" (University of Pennsylvania Masters Thesis, Graduate Program in Historic Preservation, 2007): 26-30.

⁷⁶ See the histories of Williamsburg, Anders Greenspan, *Creating Colonial Williamsburg* (Washington D.C., Smithsonian Institute, 2002), 8-37; and Richard Handler and Eric Gable, *The New History in an Old Museum: Creating the Past at Colonial Williamsburg* (Duke University Press, 1997): 25-35.

⁷⁷ On the impact of the Ludlow massacre, see Ron Chernow, *Titan: The Life of John D. Rockefeller, Sr.* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998): 571-590.

⁷⁸ Greenspan, *Creating Colonial Williamsburg*: 17-25; Handler and Gable, *The New History in an Old Museum*: 30-32.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ Quoted in Chernow, *Titan: The Life of John D. Rockefeller, Sr.*: 644.

⁸¹ Consider that for years, the issues of the Germantown *Crier*, the historical society's magazine, primarily reprinted early, antiquarian histories. Articles from John Fanning Watson, Pennypacker, Jane Campbell, and Edwin Jellet were frequently reprinted in every issue. Germantown *Crier*, 1949-53 (Vols. 1-5).

⁸² Letter from William W. Adam, board member of the Germantown Historical Society, to Otis W. Balis, treasurer of the Germantown Community Council. Stradley Papers, Germantown Historical Society.

⁸³ See David Contosta, "Philadelphia's 'Miniature Williamsburg': The Colonial Revival and Germantown's Market Square," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol CXX: 4 (1996): 296-299, on the persistence, and lack of foundation, of the myth.

⁸⁴ On the Rockefeller family's roots there in 1733 see Chernow, *Titan: The Life of John D. Rockefeller, Sr.*, 3-4, also Joseph Giovanni, "Rockefeller Tavern: The Toast of a Town," *New York Times*, July 28, 1988.

⁸⁵ Eric Pace, "Mary C. Rockefeller, Governor's Former Wife, Dead at 91," April 22, 1999, *New York Times*.

⁸⁶ Contosta, "Philadelphia's 'Miniature Williamsburg', 295-97.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Leighton P. Stradley (1880-1956) wrote on corporate taxes and wrote an economic history of Pennsylvania, *Early Financial and Economic History of Pennsylvania* (Chicago, 1942), which covered the period from colonization to 1873.

⁸⁹ Leighton Stradley to Rev. Ellsworth Jackson, August 10, 1948. Stradley Papers, GHS. Stradley made repeated references to Williamsburg in correspondence about the project. See also Leighton Stradley to Carl W. Fenninger, August 3, 1948. Stradley Papers, GHS.

⁹⁰ "We have assurances from all of the adjoining owners on the square except the church and the properties on the south side of the square. That they will cooperate in conforming their properties to architects' plans for the restoration, which will largely be on the Williamsburg model. This gives us some justification in assuming that Market Square will be nationally known and will be on the itinerary of many visitors to this section of the country following historical interests. Accordingly it will not only benefit Germantown but Philadelphia as well." Letter from Stradley to the Civil War Legion Post, 1805 Pine St., Philadelphia, October 21, 1948.

⁹¹ *Germantown Crier*, January 1949.

⁹² Letter Edward Hocker to Leighton Stradley, December 1948. Stradley Papers, GHS.

⁹³ Letter William Emhardt to Leighton Stradley, November 14, 1949. Stradley Papers, GHS

⁹⁴ December 1949, Stradley Papers, GHS.

⁹⁵ On the strike, see Margaret Tinkcom, "Depression and War, 1929-1945" in *Philadelphia: A 300-Year History* (Philadelphia, 1982): 645-647; and Wolfinger, *Divided City*, 142-173.

⁹⁶ "Auxiliary Police on 24-hour alert in PTC Stoppage," *Germantown Courier*, 10 August 1944. See also, "PTC Strike," *Main Line Times*, 10 August 1944. The suggestion of a ploy for black votes is found in *Germantown Courier*, 17 August 1944: 8.

⁹⁷ See Countryman, *Up South*, 33-49.

⁹⁸ Countryman, *Up South*, 73.

⁹⁹ Of the original 25 organizations, which ultimately grew to 30, the historical society did not take part. See YWCA Germantown Box 30, Folder 11 "Outside agencies Germantown Community Audit" in Temple Urban Archives; also "Human Relations Audit Planned in Germantown Area: Twenty-Five Major Agencies to seek facts on social adjustments, relationships," *Germantown Courier*, June 16, 1949.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ United States Census figures for 1940 counting the 22nd ward tallied 108,083 people (of which Blacks represented 10,044, or 500 residents more than 1930). The census data for 1950 showed that collectively, the German Township (Germantown, Mt. Airy and Chestnut Hill) numbered 105,334 (approximately 10% was Black). In 1950 the wards of Germantown proper (separated, and not the entire 22nd ward) numbered 69,615, 61,448 white and 8167 non-white. This represented a decrease of over 13,000 white residents. The increase in Black population was in part explained by the fact that Germantown had "become a destination for 'moneyed blacks'." See Felix, "Committed to Their Own," 155 and 245; also Delany, "Germantown and its Civic Organizations:" 8; and also see population analysis of the entire township in Barbara Ferman, Theresa Singleton, and Don Demarco, "West Mount Airy, Philadelphia" in *Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research* 4:2 (1999): 30.

¹⁰² See Lloyd M. Abernethy, *Benton Spruance: The Artist and the Man* (Associated University Presses, 1988): 116.

¹⁰³ Abernethy, *Benton Spruance*, 43.

¹⁰⁴ See Ruth E. Fine and Robert F. Looney, *The Prints of Benton Murdoch Spruance* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986).

¹⁰⁵ Quoted in Abernethy, *Benton Spruance*, 79.

¹⁰⁶ Marguerite De Angeli, *Bright April* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1946).

¹⁰⁷ The book was cited for being one of the few books of the 1940s to "look head-on at racial discrimination and injustice," quoted in Elizabeth Goodenough, Mark A. Heberle, Naomi B. Sokoloff, *Infant Tongues: The Voice of the Child in Literature* (Wayne State University Press, 1994): 241-242.

Chapter Four

“Condemnation and Restoration”:

Creativity and Conflict in Germantown, 1950-1979

This chapter describes how, between 1950 and 1979, Germantown attempted to manage change by using history in innovative ways that continue to have lasting impact. The chapter will describe an ambitious urban renewal project for Germantown Avenue that attempted to stem the neighborhood’s decline by wedding its fortunes to Philadelphia’s larger goals for regional redevelopment. The effort prompted tremendous opposition as many sectors of the community came together, this one time, to keep Germantown separate from the revitalization plans for Philadelphia. In this episode, which lasted two decades, the Avenue became a shared connection among Germantowners, even newcomers in the form of the African American community. The irony was that, to preserve some sense of Germantown’s independence from Philadelphia, the community could not agree on what Germantown should be, but only on what it should *not* be.

As with the 1930s and 1940s, postwar Germantown confronted economic downturn and loss of population. In 1950, there were over 68,000 residents in Germantown, of which fewer than 10,000 were black. By 1980, there were fewer than

49,000 residents, of which just over 10,000 were white.¹ Sears and other stores left the retail shopping district at Germantown and Cheltenham Avenues by the early 1960s. In the 1950s, large institutions, such as Germantown Academy and Germantown Friends School, explored the prospect of moving out. Germantown Academy actually did move from its 1750 home to suburban Montgomery County in 1960.² According to the director of the Germantown Community Council, this decision “added a real sense of shock and urgency. Businessmen in and out of the Council looked to urban renewal for a solution.”³

The exodus prompted an urban renewal project which went by various names in its twenty-year life. Whichever version of the urban renewal project—the Market Square project, which spawned the Colonial Germantown project, which grew into the Magaziner Plan, which included the Bypass—it would be the most divisive episode during the postwar period, and was dubbed “The Second Battle of Germantown” by a local magazine in 1967. Whatever it was called, attempts to prevent Germantown’s slide into an urban ghetto brought about fierce opposition from a fragile coalition—one which coincided with the rise of museum professionals and Germantown’s black political leadership.

The two biggest features covered by this chapter involved the presence of professionals from a wide spectrum of disciplines and the effort to turn thinking about

history into some kind of economic engine to bring Germantown out of the Depression. As these features developed they did so with the new major player in the neighborhood, the African American population. The Magaziner Plan, a plan which melded several different studies from 1952 to 1968, was the most notable of the attempts to renew Germantown along the model of the federal “Model Cities” program, which had successfully revitalized Philadelphia’s historic Society Hill district at the same moment. In Germantown the efforts also included some of the leading contemporary thinking. The problem was that the factors long at work in Germantown prevented positive efforts, such as the Historical Society’s acquisition fund or the streetscape designs for preservation-based economic development, from being coordinated for greater effect. Ironically there were many path-breaking approaches involving history, which in many ways did attempt to overcome inherent divisions in preservation in an urban neighborhood. The lack of a shared history, however, caused by institutional, systemic and cultural factors at work, kept wide-scale community solutions from being implemented in Germantown.

As in earlier decades, the neighborhood’s deep connections to American history were viewed as primary to any efforts to move Germantown ahead. This was no surprise, since many of the same groups were still involved in attempting to preserve Germantown’s history. Descendants, heritage groups, some of which consisted of society elites with connections to Philadelphia’s colonial families, and the business community

continued to support the work of history, though in ways not as festive or celebrated as earlier in the century. Though plenty of families many had moved away, a lot of Chews, Rittenhouses, Wisters and Haines remained involved in the Germantown Historical Society, the Women's Club, or other heritage groups dedicated to preservation of Germantown sites. In fact, their homes would become house museums during this period.

Germantown was quick to take advantage of developments in the preservation movement, much as it had when Germantown sites were among the first listings in the national Historic American Buildings Survey in 1934. When the Philadelphia Historical Commission was founded in 1955, Germantown architectural scholar Margaret Tinkcom was its first director. Germantown was able to gain national district status when Congress passed the National Preservation Act was passed in 1966. National stature for preservation in Germantown grew through the work of the National Park Service as steward of the Deshler Morris House (whose continual lack of funding necessitated a large role for the Historical Society) and in the opening of the Chew house by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1972.

The established historical community started to become more flexible, even if the memory infrastructure still had not. Many of the tools introduced during this period were used to move more actively into goals for the neighborhood, such as re-purposing built

structures or gaining protections against development. Ironically, as many of the Historical Society's leaders spearheaded the Magaziner Plan, its use of an acquisition fund helped it belie its earlier staid approaches by tackling urban blight in its own way and saving several historic houses.

Some of the protections even pushed preservation efforts beyond the primacy of the colonial and revolutionary periods. Victorian houses, of which there were hundreds of stellar examples in Germantown, fell under the safeguard of some preservation legislations. New museums were added, both in terms of colonial and revolutionary heritage, like when Cliveden opened to the public in 1972, but also the Victorian-era Maxwell Mansion became a museum in 1964. In spite of these successes, though, contradictions continued to result from prioritizing colonial history, such as when the Historical Society faced opposition to its Market Square plan to remove the Civil War monument in favor of an idealized colonial reproduction. Germantown had changed so much by the 1970s, that no matter how effective and well-prepared the imaginative plans, the traditional history community no longer had the power to enforce its vision or enact any approach that placed colonial history as primary, because it had built so little support within other sectors of the community.

This chapter demonstrates how three groups in particular that had a great impact in German Township between 1950 and 1980: urban planners, community organizers,

and museum professionals. With training particular to their fields, professionals from each group made a decided impact on the Avenue because of some very creative approaches to preservation, architectural restoration, and community organizing. Not surprisingly for Germantown, history was a prime factor in the work of all of them, though not all succeeded. Urban planners had a lot of the stage, but ultimately many of their plans were rejected. Museum professionals only gradually brought curatorial training to work at Germantown's house museums. Of all the groups at work in Germantown during the postwar period, the most successful in terms of meeting their objectives were by far the community organizers.

During the period covered here, black community organizers, many of them militants in the early civil rights era, were able to channel reactions to how history was being used toward organizing their own fragmented constituencies. The work of David Richardson, for instance, who became a state legislator for Germantown, began his career with protests calling for the teaching of black history at Germantown High School. As Germantown's changing population brought minority groups into the majority in the neighborhood, Richardson and others harnessed opposition to urban renewal to demand more say in how state and federal funds got spent. The groups that rejected the bypass welcomed the accomplishment, but opposition meant that the first real effort to include

Germantown in the city's economic planning were rejected; no more such plans would involve Germantown for the rest of the century.

In the end, the institutional, systemic, and cultural factors made it hard for to coordinate the creative work being done. This chapter will, first, introduce the Magaziner Plan as it developed in the context of urban planning as a way to reverse Germantown's economic fortunes. It then explores how historic preservation and museum professionals continued to move Germantown's historic resources into the forefront of thinking about how history could be used. The chapter finally examines how community organizers, particularly among the black community, organized residents for action, but in ways that enhanced the tendencies that kept Germantown divided. There was a view of Germantown that saw opportunity where others saw decline. The factors of the Germantown Problem made sure that even the positive results at work remained in isolation from one another.

“Renewing” Germantown

The many creative approaches attempting to solve Germantown's structural problems had two things in common. First, each effort involved history in some respect. Second, they all mentioned how the efforts would “renew” Germantown. It is necessary to explore what this meant in the context of urban renewal.

The Magaziner Plan used the phrase “Condemnation and Restoration” to explain the process of tearing large tracts of buildings down in order to save the neighborhood. Condemning to restore showed how “renewal” was based on the sense that Germantown’s best days were behind it. Ironically, the involvement of professionals like Henry Magaziner indicated the interest with which they approached working in Germantown, offering a newcomer’s sense of opportunity. This was not unlike how black Germantowners saw hope and progress where others saw decline.

Historian Alison Isenberg described in her history of commercial downtowns that decline is not the way to approach the history of downtown commercial life, since it really has been a story of continual reshaping, often the product of dynamic local interests.⁴ Paradoxically, there was leadership and imagination brought to Germantown during this period to connect the neighborhood with regional, state, and federal projects; however the efforts only served to further fragmentation within the community. Methods to enact renewal like the Magaziner Plan were based on the belief that only bold action would save Germantown because of its decline, which turned potential supporters into adversaries.

Henry Magaziner is a Philadelphia architect with many Germantown connections. His distinguished career has led to the establishment of the *Henry Magaziner Award for Preservation* by the Philadelphia chapter of the American Institute for Architects. He

was involved in the preservation of Independence Hall among many other historic buildings. He also worked in Germantown in the mid-1960s (helping save Maxwell Mansion) and early 1970s (serving a long tenure as a member of the board of the Germantown Historical Society). And he served as head of the Germantown Community Council's Physical Planning Division in the early 1960s.⁵ He described himself as an architect who "since 1936 has given considerable thought to various sorts of schemes to restore to national prominence those portions of Germantown Avenue containing the historic house concentrations."⁶

His plan, *A Proposal for the Revitalization of the Heart of Germantown*, was first presented in May 1952, then revised once in 1956 to include more of Mt. Airy, and revised again in 1960 to describe the issues Germantown was facing as being the outcome of a lack of planning.⁷ Urban planners, some of whom would become nationally known, such as Jack Kendree, worked on elements of the plans. The latter versions were developed for the Philadelphia Planning Commission. The efforts culminated in the 1966 *Central Germantown Urban Renewal Area Technical Report*, which the Philadelphia architecture firm Bower and Fradley finalized for the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority.⁸ At least five separate studies resulted from Magaziner's original conception.

For this study, the various plans have been examined in a way that conflates some of the specifics in order to clarify the vision of what would be known as the Magaziner

Plan. Magaziner's study showed confidence that Germantown could actively recreate itself as a "regional center" for shopping. The plan radically redrew Germantown Avenue to use a restored Market Square as a support for the Germantown-Cheltenham shopping district on the southern end of Germantown Avenue and create a northern historic area buttressing a newly created shopping district on the northern end of Germantown Avenue.⁹ That district called for the relocation of seven historic buildings near to Wyck, between Walnut Lane and Tulpehocken Street, which would attract visitors to a new shopping district considered attractive by Magaziner for its combination of "modernization and restoration" with modern stores filling restored facades. "The interesting old buildings would continue to be used as stores, which would be carefully conceived to blend harmoniously with the old buildings. He also called to make a square around New Town Hall "for morale-building possibilities."¹⁰ In between would be a tree-lined pedestrian zone, with buses the only vehicles allowed access. The proposal for the construction of an eight-lane "traffic loop" around the Germantown-Cheltenham business district (the location of major department stores still holding on in the early 1960s) became known as the "Bypass". Parking garage towers would be built along the side areas created by this redrawing of the arterial axis of Germantown Avenue.

The 1950s versions of the Magaziner plan had a visionary reach, but they were grounded in the influence of the Williamsburg model. Addressing the issues of traffic

congestion and store placement, Magaziner wrote, “It would be possible to restore historic Germantown Avenue at the most interesting points. This could be done either by very restrictive zoning and voluntary cooperation, or if the funds were available, by actual condemnation and restoration of the old mansions with their grounds.”¹¹

Magaziner pointed to the success in Philadelphia’s Fairmount Park of the river drives, whose construction had torn down many dilapidated structures to augment the historic houses nearby and fashion one continuous park.

Creating a full park-like vista along Germantown Avenue would restore it and “would produce a Philadelphia ‘Williamsburg’ of possibly greater historic importance than the Virginia Williamsburg, and more accessible to our greatest population centers.”¹² Tearing down and rebuilding to get the desired result, or as Magaziner put it, “condemning in order to restore,” characterized the plan. The antecedents were there and the vision for Germantown history was bold. “It took Herculean efforts to reconstruct a Williamsburg from what were little more than archeological ruins. Similar great efforts were required to collect from all over New England the building which today form Old Sturbridge, Massachusetts and Mystic, Connecticut. By contrast here on Germantown Avenue, virtually nothing needs to be assembled nor newly constructed. The historic buildings stand here assembled, abounding in history, exuding architectural charm, ready

to be made into a national attraction.”¹³ According to the plan, Germantown could outdo Williamsburg.

At the time, the Williamsburg model had captured the imagination of the country. Banks, insurance companies had accepted “false colonial” so vast areas of the east and midwest modeled themselves on the restoration. There were Williamsburg drive-ins, A&Ps and banks, hotels and gas stations.¹⁴ Germantown’s plan, based on its remarkable historic resources, would be in keeping with fashion, but offer the real thing. The long shadow of Colonial Williamsburg would never entirely go away from Germantown. The community development corporation formed to put into effect this version of urban renewal went so far as to name itself “Colonial Germantown, Inc.” in the early 1950s.

For most cities, urban renewal programs to revitalize decaying inner cities failed because of divisions that could not be overcome. This has been described as the divisions between private investment and public funding—that real estate developers (mostly white) and government policies (trying to solve housing and poverty crises) were often at odds.¹⁵ When crises occurred in this way, such as in Chicago, the government-funded approach tended to hold sway, with a divisive effect on poorer inner city populations, mostly African Americans.¹⁶

As Thomas Sugrue described in Detroit, the process moved poor communities out to build public housing, but the exodus of manufacturing from northern and eastern cities

meant that while there was new housing, there were no new jobs in urban environments.¹⁷ Other cities, like Atlanta, saw progress in the ability to form effective coalitions between white economic interests and growing black political to attract jobs while bringing newly empowered political groups into the process.¹⁸ New Haven was also held up as a model, since it incorporated historic preservation with anti-poverty programs, something that other cities could not necessarily coordinate effectively. For largely black communities, the results could be devastating, such as with Charlottesville, Virginia, where entire hubs of black cultural life were eliminated.¹⁹ Germantown's case could not necessarily bring together preservation and anti-poverty programs, but, ironically, no poor neighborhoods were destroyed because the urban renewal projects for Germantown were rejected.

Urban renewal in Philadelphia began as early as 1939 as a movement to reform the political process and end Republican one-party rule. In 1951 Philadelphia adopted a new city charter and elected Democratic Mayor Joseph Clark, who began a vast urban renewal program. African American voters provided crucial support for this reform movement, bringing Democratic Party control to the city for the first time in generations. Slated for completion in the early 21st century, urban renewal called for the improvement of highways and the transportation system, housing projects, and the building of more libraries, parks, and shopping and recreation centers. Where urban renewal was implemented most fully in Philadelphia was University City and Society Hill. In each

case the conditions for federal funding, whether it came from the Truman, Eisenhower, or Kennedy and Johnson administrations, required a major local player to coordinate the government investment.

For Philadelphia, the redevelopment authority was that instrument, and it required a local agent to implement the federal funds.²⁰ In University City, a section of West Philadelphia, the local conduit became the University of Pennsylvania. This led, during the 1950s and 1960s to the destruction of at least one black neighborhood, “Black Bottom”, through the expansion of the university and the demolition of neighborhoods near the university.²¹ In the Society Hill section of Philadelphia, home of the Independence Hall historic area, the Society Hill Civic Association worked with the redevelopment authority and the National Park Service to craft a mixture of historic preservation and modern high rises in the downtown area.²² These were not seamless development projects, but rather contested processes that ultimately produced modernization to these neighborhoods.

As one Philadelphia history noted of this period, “It was commonly assumed that Philadelphia’s mingling of races and ethnic groups had in the past worked pretty well, but this assumption was questionable.”²³ The divisions within the city, so evident in the strikes and ethnic strife in the era before and during World War II, were sharper during the postwar economic crisis as Philadelphia lost its manufacturing sector, then its

population and tax base. The control over federal funding began to cause deep rifts among the Democratic coalition, prompting changes in the power structure. Democratic Mayor Tate tried to empower local community groups in the federal Model Cities program, but the Model Cities program saw the Nixon administration crack down hard on black community groups' participation in the process.²⁴ The outcome was black community groups moving from non-violent protests as in the civil rights movement to strategies to bring electoral success and gain more power over decisions made about urban renewal. Germantown would not be brought into the overall city vision for renewal, bringing a new chapter to its sense of separation from Philadelphia.

The many divisions that could not be overcome also played a tremendous role. Germantown tried to reshape its commercial core and ended up reshaping its entire power structure by making use of its historic fabric to develop the Avenue. There was private interest by the business community and some in the historical community. The way, however, that the development corporation, Colonial Germantown, Inc., went about building the Market Square restoration into an urban renewal project did not bring in enough support from the rest of the community to make these changes possible. Germantown typified the trend in Philadelphia over urban renewal where “disputes over local community participation became a regular feature.”²⁵ And since the plans for Germantown were presented as preserving the colonial features of Germantown, they

brought the disputes into the realm of historic preservation. As historian Michael Wallace has written about preservation in cities, urban renewal began to build a wider coalition of preserving the past. He argued that the 1964 and 1967 riots in many cities were in some ways rooted in the reaction against urban renewal and highway construction.²⁶

Like other neighborhoods faced with the government coming in, tearing down buildings and installing highways, Germantown saw a coalition form to oppose the bypass plan. Germantown's coalition of historians, social agencies, working class groups, and black residents was fragile because it had little experience working together. To call it a "coalition" overstates its cohesiveness. Wallace described how "Traditional preservationists had a lot of trouble establishing an alliance with black constituencies, even apart from black reluctance."²⁷ Partly this was because what was "historic" meant beautiful and many poor people's housing or places of worship were not pretty. Another problem was that strategies used by preservationists in the past did not work well in black communities. As Wallace wrote, "There was seldom overwhelming support for preservation in black communities. Many were ill-disposed to preserving places indelibly connected with white supremacy or poverty."²⁸ This became true for Germantown as the legacies of bigotry and division throughout the century came to a head during this period. Even though the efforts to oppose the urban renewal plans were

effective and broader based than usual for Germantown, the coalition broke apart almost immediately after the plan was defeated for good in 1972.

During the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, there were many factors that caused urban renewal to fail in Germantown, but the key component is the African American population of Germantown. The interest here is how urban renewal plans and studies were received by the black community. Its real effect was to underscore, for African Americans, the need for black control of decision-making processes. The lack of input, not historic preservation, was one reason for black opposition to urban renewal in Germantown. The other was that the process of urban renewal emphasized the narrative of decline rather than that of progress. The clash helped precipitate a shift in tactics. As Wilson Goode, a black activist who would eventually become Philadelphia's first African-American mayor, declared in 1970, "Black priorities have moved from integration in the 1950s through the 1960s riots and civil rights movement to control of institutions in the 1970s."²⁹ For blacks now growing into more than 40% of the population in Philadelphia and a majority in Germantown, the issues were about education, poverty, and investment. Seeking greater input into decisions about commercial corridor plans went hand in hand with educational reform and anti-poverty. It meant securing decision making power in the bodies that brokered the federal and state funds, namely political office and the administration of social agencies, such as

Germantown Settlement, which steered government funded programs. As Michael deHaven Newsom wrote in 1971, “Adequate planning for black input at the initial stage of a project would, of course, remove the necessity of disruption.”³⁰ The Magaziner Plan did not take that into account, a lesson about the need for buy-in that would need to be learned frequently in Germantown. After 1972, Germantown’s black leadership had far more say about how local decisions got made than did the leaders of the Historical Society. As Isenberg wrote, “Throughout the twentieth century the tension between democratic rhetoric and exclusionary practices continually redefined and transformed urban commercial life.”³¹ Pressures to change, coming from within the historical profession and from the neighborhood, could not force a greater shared history.

Even though the Historical Society employed creative approaches to preservation and slightly extended its reach to periods other than colonial, the result was that the traditional nostalgic approach, emphasizing colonial and the revolutionary heritage, was no longer viable to renew the community through its history.

From Architectural Survey to Preservation Action

By 1950, Germantown’s population since the 1930s had decreased by over 13,000 white residents.³² Given the demographic changes, one might expect that the memory infrastructure would change to reflect them. On the contrary, this section will show a

memory infrastructure still geared toward colonial and revolutionary history. The growing presence of professionals involved in preservation that began with the Historic American Buildings Survey, however, continued to challenge how history on Germantown Avenue would be managed.

Six house museums could be found in Germantown in 1950, each devoted to a slightly different aspect of the colonial or revolutionary period and with slightly different stewards. In addition to Stenton, run by the National Society for Colonial Dames but owned by the City of Philadelphia, there were also Grumblethorpe (opened in 1940), run by the Philadelphia Society for the Preservation of Landmarks, and Upsala (which opened in 1950 after being rebuilt following a fire), run by the Upsala Foundation, whose efforts were greatly aided by the group that ran Grumblethorpe, founded by Frances Wister. The restoration of Upsala following the fire was coordinated by local architect George C. Johnson, who had also served as restoration architect at Grumblethorpe. The Concord Schoolhouse was also privately run, though it had served for a few years as a museum of the Germantown Historical Society (when it had begun as the Site and Relic Society). In 1945, the Schoolhouse governing structure merged with that of the adjacent Upper Burying Ground creating an organization to care for both the 1775 school and the 1693 cemetery. If nothing else the abundance of history museums added to the number

of organizations already clogging the institutional landscape in Germantown. And as far as groups overseeing historic sites, that was not even the whole picture.

In addition to the historic houses that were open to the public, there were also several in private hands, most of which would be opened on important anniversaries and history festivals. Several sites were owned and operated by community groups, such as the 1768 Johnson House run by the Women's Club of Germantown or Vernon House which served as headquarters of the Germantown Community Council. Then there were the numerous churches which provided oversight to institutions such as the 1752 Dunkard School or the 1770 Mennonite Meeting. And several prominent families, such as the Haines descendents at Wyck and Chew relatives at Cliveden, held their historic estates in private, but opened them to the public on anniversaries or for curatorial field trips by the Museum of Art.

By far the biggest player in the historical community remained the Germantown Historical Society. It ran two historic houses itself, the Conygham and Hacker houses, using one for its museum collections and one for its library. The Society's role in the community, however, extended well beyond the walls of its museum and library. As shown in the previous chapter, the Society had a large role in helping present the Deshler Morris House, which was donated to the National Park Service in 1948 and which opened to the public in 1950. The house was left to the National Park Service with no

endowment and little in the way of original furnishing intrinsic to the history of the Deshler or Morris families, let alone actual remnants of George Washington and the time he spent there with his household. By virtue of the agreement between the National Park Service and the Historical Society, the first manager of the Deshler-Morris House was Society president Leighton Stradley. The appointment showed that the promise of the investment by the National Park Service in Germantown had not been fully funded—a promise that had led to the desire to turn Market Square into a tourist attraction on the Williamsburg model.

The Historical Society used creative approaches to preservation, particularly acquiring properties in order to spare them from the wrecking ball. During the 1950s and 1960s, in the words of Philadelphia historian Roger Moss, the Society “directly intervened to preserve more buildings of architectural and historical importance than any other privately-funded group in the region.”³³ Concerns over development had been heightened by the tearing down of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century structures only to be replaced by garden apartments in the years after World War II. Because several houses had been bequeathed to the Society as early as the 1920s, it had gradually become active in advocating for and protecting the properties it could. Judge Harold D. Saylor, who succeeded Stradley as the Society’s president in 1951, led the effort to take this more active approach to historic preservation, which led to an acquisition fund in the 1960s.

The Society would purchase and restore older buildings, virtually all of them along Germantown Avenue, as they came up for sale. “To the Society’s banner have rallied owners of historic homes willing to donate their properties to save them from an uncertain future.”³⁴ All told, the Society acquired and largely saved a dozen historic properties over the years.³⁵

This would continue into the 1970s as protections became available to preserve historic properties, first through the Philadelphia Historical Commission beginning in 1955, then with the National Register of Historic Places in 1966. Using the acquisition fund, the Society was able to purchase abandoned or derelict historic properties and enlist historic easements on them, and then sell the homes. The fund was an innovative step that even pushed a few members of the Society to resign.³⁶ That these efforts were done in reaction to the changing shape and complexion of the neighborhood, and with some of the new professional approaches available at the time, made the efforts especially provocative. This creative solution for economic revitalization presaged community development corporations and even the *Main Street* model established by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in the 1980s.

Under Stradley, the Society also applied for and received a grant to survey the historic architecture of the German Township. For the work, the Society hired architectural historians with close ties to university scholarship and architectural

preservation, Harry and Margaret Tinkcom. The latter worked as the first-ever director of the Philadelphia Historical Commission and her work became essential to the development of preservation action in Philadelphia and in Germantown in particular. Founded in 1955, and beginning the following year, the Philadelphia Historical Commission grew out of, yet remains independent from, the city planning commission. Building on the HABS surveys and research going back to the era of John Fanning Watson, the Philadelphia Historical Commission has played a lasting role in Germantown, both in its regulatory support for preservation and in its leadership.

Dr. Margaret Tinkcom drew on and expanded the HABS work in Philadelphia, building the initial HABS list of 60 buildings (mostly eighteenth-century) to 600 by 1959. According to a recent history, “Under her supervision, all existing archival material for the registered historical buildings of Philadelphia was thoroughly sorted and organized.”³⁷ In her capacity with the historical commission (after which she held the title of “Historian of the City of Philadelphia”), Tinkcom put the extensive surveys of the HABS drawings into active protection mode. Protections established extended to unsympathetic alterations or demolition (which now required a permit). Tinkcom’s appointment coincided with a book, *Historic Germantown*, which revealed much about the approach of Philadelphia’s preservation community, particularly its consideration of Germantown’s colonial history.³⁸

In addition to being the first book about Germantown history since Hocker's 1933 general history, Tinkcom's was the first written by professional architectural historians. Co-written with her husband Harry Tinkcom, a professor of colonial history at Temple University, and Grant Miles, the book was published by the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia. The book fits characteristically in the traditional mode of Germantown's neighborhood history books, being a building-by-building guide to its eighteenth-century architecture. It is worth considering in more depth because the book is steeped in the traditional Germantown way of presenting an architectural history and in some ways represents the highest point of it. Paradoxically, this was done while offering the first glimpse of an entirely new approach, one represented by professionally trained historians analyzing the data, steeped in the skills to actualize its recommendations.

Following an introductory chapter summarizing the colonial and revolutionary history, the book presented a house-by-house survey of Germantown's eighteenth-century architecture, much like the studies of Keyser and Jenkins. The book essentially updated the thinking about colonial Germantown architecture since the studies of John Fanning Watson, but it did so by examining the existing literature, including numerous colonial records in different languages. The book not only examined architectural significance, but neatly summarized the activities of Germantown townspeople and the lasting legacy still extant in the twentieth century, arguing that its geographic location

played a large measure in its importance to America. It encapsulated the historic significance of colonial Germantown with up to date analysis. Each colonial-era building was described thoroughly, summarizing the existing architectural records, photographs, existing accounts and building drawings. Like other books by Jenkins and Keyser, the book looked at houses within their neighborhood context. The cumulative effect of the study of so many eighteenth-century structures is to show the largely positive record of historic preservation in Germantown. The preservation efforts of the antiquarians had left to later generations a rich built environment.

With Tinkcom, what became clear was that preservationists in Germantown had to be vigilant to keep it that way. The book argued successfully that the architecture in Germantown spanned the neighborhood and extended well past the growing number of buildings open to the public, taking into account the hundreds of historic structures in Germantown that were not museums. The book represented a historical survey, but soon thereafter, the city began to move actively into historic preservation protections with the historical commission's activities.

From its inception, the Philadelphia Historical Commission run by Margaret Tinkcom was the only historical preservation agency to have jurisdiction over the entire area of a major American city.³⁹ Philadelphia's regulation of the demolition of buildings would now proceed in a considered fashion, weighing the "public welfare" in the

discussion of what buildings should stand and which should be sacrificed to development. The commission would also have some legal means to prevent wanton destruction of old buildings, at first the legal support would remain local, though state and national preservation laws began to appear in the late 1950s and early 1960s.⁴⁰ One example that stood out by exception was the saving of the 1857 Victorian Maxwell Mansion, which became a community effort to save the Victorian house (nicknamed the “Adams Family House” for its gothic revival appearance) and prevent it from being demolished. The house had been listed in the Historic American Building Survey and considered for designation status by the Philadelphia Historical Commission. The work to save the house also benefited from the support of the Victorian Society of America (founded in 1966) which had established its national office in Philadelphia.⁴¹ In order for the community group to receive tax-deductible donations, it worked in concert with the Germantown Historical Society, an established charity. This allowed the community group to lease the building until it could purchase it in 1986.

The Philadelphia and Germantown experiences coincided with work at the national level, as with the 1953 merger of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the National Council for Historic Sites and Buildings.⁴² The merger allowed the National Trust to begin advocacy for national level protections, in addition to acquiring and maintaining selected historic sites. The legal work of historic preservation would

continue to build an active and persistent approach, particularly with high-profile cases like the demolition of Penn Station in New York in 1964 and role of the White House in urging Congress to take up preservation legislation regarding the fate of Lafayette Square in Washington in 1962.⁴³ The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 established further protections, with the Philadelphia Historical Commission acting on behalf of the state and federal designations to regulate building permits or alterations to historic structures.

The work of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, therefore, like the role of Philadelphia in the 1930s HABS project, was in keeping with, but slightly ahead of, the development of preservation thinking in the United States. (Consider that the New York City's Landmarks Commission was not founded until 1965.) With a Germantown scholar directing it, the commission lent a potent voice to the role of history in Germantown by designating seventy-five buildings for limited exterior protections that the Philadelphia Historical Commission could lend (for instance a designated building must apply to the historical commission to repaint or replace windows in a sympathetic manner).⁴⁴

Likewise, when the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act passed, Germantown was right in step, with Stenton and Cliveden listed on the newly established National Register of Historic Places. Additionally, the two-mile stretch of Germantown Avenue

between Stenton and Cliveden was declared a district in its own right (the “Colonial Germantown District”). The work of the Tinkcoms, in concert with architects of the National Park Service, resulted in Germantown Avenue, for all intents and purposes, being declared a National Historic Landmark.⁴⁵ This was the culmination of the decades of work of the entire Germantown preservation community. Notably, the Avenue designation was for colonial heritage. On the basis of this work, Germantown had a deeper process for preservation—what preservationists call the “enabling environment,” that is, the legal rules and protections that allow for the historic fabric of a building or community to be saved. There were now many more tools which later groups could use to develop the memory infrastructure.

Shortly after her work began at the historical commission and upon the publication of *Historic Germantown*, Tinkcom’s role was put to work regarding the Market Square restoration project. Her stature as the preeminent architectural historian of Germantown and historian of the city of Philadelphia put her at odds with the Germantown Historical Society over the plans for Colonial Germantown, Inc. She stood as an interesting pivot point between the privately-funded preservation work and the ever-growing role of professionals, and the government, in the realm of history in Germantown.

Concern for Germantown: Stage Managing the Past to Cope with the Present

Shortly after World War II there were many initiatives that began to give Germantown its later reputation as a community where plans and studies go to die.⁴⁶ Among the examples of the 1930s and 1940s already discussed were the Historic American Buildings Surveys (in which Germantown had 10 of the first buildings of the first 60 studied) and the Germantown Community Audit. While studies and plans in the 1930s and 1940s surveyed what existed and what was going on, the 1950s saw much more action taken toward making various plans reality. As shown in the Market Square restoration project, attempts were made to attack the declining state of the local economy and the exodus of population.

To cope with the prospect of major institutions and wealthy white residents leaving Germantown for the suburbs, planners, architects, and business and civic leaders gathered to create a new entity, "Concern for Germantown." Begun under the leadership of Leighton Stradley and including many Germantown civic and business leaders, this group explored various action steps and approached an architectural firm in 1952 to consider the larger picture for Germantown. Some of steps included imaginative approaches to the problems at hand, well in keeping with efforts being made at the time in other communities throughout the country. The approaches grew into a larger discussion with professionals from the Philadelphia Planning Commission, ultimately

resulting in various versions of a redevelopment plan for Germantown in conjunction with city and national authorities. The first effort to do this was the Market Square project, whose origins were described in the preceding chapter.

Germantown's plans to rejuvenate Market Square involved remodeling in order to stimulate commercial and retail activities, long a strength in Germantown. It did so as the plans offered by Henry Magaziner began to become public. Ultimately, Germantown's plans for a radically altered downtown would feature a restored Market Square, along with moving several other historic buildings. In this context, the Germantown Historical Society's plan for Market Square was an attempt to recreate a certain nostalgic atmosphere, and its growth into a component of the Magaziner Plan for central Germantown and the commercial corridor were slightly ahead of their times.⁴⁷

Indeed the plan and its four updates tackled the issues facing the community in a comprehensive vision that was bold—assessing parks and recreation and school delinquency, as well as the economic and physical state of Germantown. It approached community revitalization holistically in ways which involved design coherence, planning, economic restructuring and volunteer engagement long before such approaches became the core of the National Trust's *Main Street* approach to commercial corridor revitalization. Magaziner's plan was unable to succeed, however, since it was hard to

engage a splintered community in a bold vision if the community was not sufficiently prepared or its support actively sought.

The Market Square restoration project planning moved ahead in spite of the resistance of Civil War descendent groups and members of the Germantown Historical Society expressed in 1948 and 1949. After Stradley's resignation as president of the Society, however, Judge Harold Saylor was appointed president and he led the Society away from active involvement in the Market Square project, particularly after the protest regarding the proposed removal of the Civil War Monument.⁴⁸

The project was not dead, though, because other business leaders continued to attempt to acquire real estate on the square, though without total success, since several owners of prominent Victorian buildings refused to sell. The group, now under the leadership of a Germantown Avenue insurance company owner Arthur Rosenlund, continued to retain architect Edwin Brumbaugh, a firm believer in the restoration of colonial architecture to create an atmosphere of the ideals of the early period. Brumbaugh had a reputation in Pennsylvania (his father had been governor) both as a restoration architect and as a designer of new structures in the colonial style. He connected the project explicitly with a recreation of Williamsburg in Germantown.⁴⁹ Now called "Colonial Germantown, Inc.," the group also hired an executive director, the professional urban planner Jack Hornung, to stimulate the plan's progress.⁵⁰

At this point the Philadelphia Planning Commission entered the picture with a broader study for Germantown in 1956, based on Magaziner's 1952 study for "Concern for Germantown." The planning commission's plan featured a group of professional urban planners, Henry S. Churchill and Jack M. Kendree, who took Magaziner's architectural study and added demographic, voting, income, schools and crime data in sophisticated fashion.⁵¹ It was revised and expanded in 1959 and 1960 to include the Mt. Airy section of German Township, expressly concerned that, without consideration of the strengths and weakness of Greater Germantown, other institutions like Germantown Academy would leave the community. The report listed a working committee of community leaders, including realtors, the head of the Germantown Community Council, and the president of the Historical Society, as well as a list of 16 sponsoring organizations, including the YWCA, churches and schools.⁵² It spelled out in stark terms the decreases in population, both by census tract and by public school enrollment. Interestingly the study cited evidence that population growth was going to increase significantly by the 1980s and charted in specific terms the growth of registered non-white registered voters.⁵³ From that premise the planners made preparations regarding the postwar period's chief planning concern—the use of the automobile.

Together with this study, Magaziner drafted another plan for the Philadelphia Planning Commission, this one in May 1963 (with a second part in March 1964),

bringing the many different planning efforts into a full-fledged renewal effort.⁵⁴ This plan rested on three assumptions implicit in its proposals, one about population growth, one about the character of the residents, and one about funding.

First, the plan followed projections that showed that Northwest Philadelphia was going to grow rapidly in the 1970s and 1980s and that other areas, like Mt. Airy, Chestnut Hill and Roxborough were going to grow enough to offset any net loss from the white flight from Germantown. According to the 1960 and 1964 plans, “Population increase will be the source of all problems—will double by 1980. The pressure to fill up areas of low density such as Germantown and Chestnut Hill cannot be resisted. That is, by 1980 Germantown may have 150,000 to 175,000 instead of 103,000 it has now.”⁵⁵ According to Magaziner, “The population explosion could hit greater Germantown harder than most areas of the city.” Only planning could prevent this.⁵⁶ With the growth of population would come pressures on the infrastructure, housing stock, and traffic patterns in the neighborhood. Traffic and parking were key issues and Magaziner and the planners took great pains to express creative solutions. This meant that planners pushed to address what they considered a potentially alarming scenario. Consequently they made the traffic and parking changes very pronounced in their presentations, precipitating community opposition.⁵⁷ The reality, however, was that the population did not grow as

projected, in fact the population levels of Germantown would fall 14% over the thirty years after 1950.

The second assumption was Magaziner's positive analysis of Germantown's response to its changing racial composition. "Germantown's vitality has been shown in the way it has met the recent racial change in some of its neighborhoods. Panic did not develop there as it did in many other areas. Rather Germantown has worked through its problems."⁵⁸ Magaziner's hopefulness rested on what he described as citizen-based redevelopment, something he called "uniquely Germantown-like" and cited specifically the work of the Historical Society and the Colonial Germantown planners. He described the community as having "so alert and articulate a citizenry. It has constantly been alert to zoning changes. It has formed countless neighborhood civic organizations. It has fathered the Germantown Community Council and the Colonial Germantown, Inc. It has many dynamic institutions. The resourcefulness is there. The wish is there."⁵⁹ Along with the wish there was support among the Germantown Community Council.⁶⁰

For Magaziner the historic character of the neighborhood was obvious, and reflected in more than its architecture. "Germantown is one of America's oldest communities. It is also one of its most vital." These attributes meant that, "even though it has suffered decline as a business/commercial area, it still retains great potential for

redevelopment as a strong regional center because it is neither a city nor a suburb, but retains the best features of both.”⁶¹

Magaziner saw the many historic preservation groups involved in the community as an asset and the plan could count on even more than the ones already present, such as the National Park Service. For instance, the state historical commission, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Germantown Historical Society should seek the expansion of state and federal groups of their presence in Germantown.⁶² On the historic character of Germantown, Magaziner noted not merely the colonial and revolutionary eras, but wrote “as early as 1688 Germantown protested publicly against slavery.”⁶³ This made clear to Magaziner that the history of Germantown’s tradition of social action and consideration of race was part of his thinking about the layout of the physical plan. This may have led to the planners taking for granted how much work was really needed to secure support from black community organizers.

The third assumption was that to enact the plan, Magaziner hoped that “a major foundation would provide funds.”⁶⁴ National foundations like Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation and Carl Schurz Foundation were suggested, for “a restored Germantown Avenue would be a wonderful way to teach history and to teach the lesson of European-American cooperation.”⁶⁵

This also meant that implementation of the plan required a body to bring the various groups together. There “should be a coordinating agency for long-range planning though not another ‘coordinating’ agency,” because of Germantown’s inability to develop one successful entity, even though it had been desired for many years. For Magaziner, this did not merely mean a neighborhood group to bring “unity in the community,” but more of a development corporation. “An agency in planning matters, with a staff, would relate to planning overall and long range theory, leaving the local groups to work out immediate plans and problems.” It would be “an organization that would study in depth the physical development of the area. Most planning studies are based on physical aspects of growth and change but no action gets taken unless there’s money. It’s possible for Germantown to attack this problem differently. Germantown is a part of a larger political unit of Philadelphia but it is large enough and varied enough and self-conscious enough to act as a political force. If focus for community action could be found, there is hope that objective planning can become reality.”⁶⁶

For Germantown, the money would flow if one body could bring the long list of agencies that Magaziner called for to realize the plan. This meant that, as with the Rockefeller Myth of Germantown, a few private funders could save the day. Such a belief proved fruitless when hopes for it never materialized. Without the major issue of

funding addressed, the question became which group would bring the plan into focus. Specifically, which group could capitalize on federal dollars to remake Germantown?

The entity that brought the plan into focus had to sell the plan to the community. To Magaziner, the “Concern for Germantown” entity could be a start in this coordinating role, particularly when working in concert with Germantown Council’s Physical Planning Division, but it was clear that more authority was required. In the words of the director of Germantown Community Council at the time, William Will, “In the urban renewal of those days, it took three to tango: A plan, community support for that plan, and a development corporation to carry. Germantown had a plan and community support, but it still needed the corporation. Enter Colonial Germantown, Inc.”⁶⁷

The city agency steering urban renewal projects in Philadelphia was the Redevelopment Authority, which typically worked with a community consultant. The Authority engaged Colonial Germantown, Inc., which already had an established presence among Germantown business leaders. According to the former head of the Germantown Community Council, Francis X. Delany, this meant two things. First was that Colonial Germantown, Inc. and its director, Jack Hornung, would provide technical assistance on urban renewal in Germantown. And second, the two groups became inextricably linked, since the board chairs were *ipso facto* members of the board and executive committees of the other group.

The relationship did not, however, work out as hoped. As Delany wrote, “At last the Council had a potential rival for community leadership. Colonial Germantown was a partner in theory, but an adversary in practice.”⁶⁸ And as Hornung said, “We thought that by putting the president of the Community Council on our board we’d have a liaison, but it didn’t work out that way.”⁶⁹ By 1966, the Redevelopment Authority had incorporated much of Magaziner’s plan, modifying the location of the bypass loop and forgoing the Market Square restoration, saying “nothing like that is going to be financed with renewal funds,” from federal urban renewal.⁷⁰

The plan reflected a high point of thinking by some of the best minds in the country about problems that had plagued Germantown for many years. There had been a problem stemming from a main thoroughfare with too few intersections since the seventeenth-century, very ill-suited to the demands of automobiles and trucks. Only in the 1960s, though, did professionals and consultants weigh in on developing a vision to address commonly-perceived problems. Magaziner and other planners perceived that the right combination of approaches could make Germantown look as elegant in its mix of history and modern amenities as Society Hill in the historic area of downtown Philadelphia, and make it more significant than Williamsburg.⁷¹

The vision was artfully rendered and, in concert with *some* of Germantown’s leaders, it aimed for a big plan, because, in Magaziner’s words, “Only the big plan, one

with centralized direction, will solve the little problems and the big ones as well. Bold thinking is what is needed.”⁷² The attempt to bring the plan through the City Council gave the community plenty to consider. The community, proved articulate and largely animated about the plan, though mostly against it.

“The Second Battle of Germantown”

By 1960, Germantown’s decline was clearly visible. The neighborhood’s population had dropped considerably and white families were moving out, along with institutions like Germantown Academy. As noted in the census records and studies by the LaSalle Urban Center, “the Black population in 1960 had grown to 27 percent of the total with significant increases in every neighborhood.”⁷³ The efforts to hold big community festivals, always one of Germantown’s great civic strengths, fell on harder and harder times. Germantown Week was changed several times since its high point in the late 1940s, with a version called “Vernon Fair Week” in the 1950s that highlighted the many different community groups that were steadily growing in number. The Germantown Community Council held it as a joint week with the Historical Society. In 1963, however, “the ailing Vernon Fair finally died.”⁷⁴

It would not be the only sign that times were very different. The battle to enact the physical alteration of Germantown for the sake of its revival would engulf the

community and forever alter the landscape, though not in ways that the planners intended. Henry Magaziner had concluded a largely hopeful and well-considered plan by remarking that “Germantown is fortunate in being so articulate. It speaks through dozens of civic groups and a great concentration of important institutions.”⁷⁵ Ironically it was this level of civic outspokenness which became the plan’s undoing. The public opposition to the plan became the biggest civic event of the period, far more engaging to the community than any of the attempts at Vernon Park festivals.

The 1960s in Germantown could, on one level, be told as a story of a community in decline refusing to go along with consultants and planners on behalf of the government who had rubbed its leaders the wrong way. The development, presentation, and rejection of the Magaziner Plan, however, reflected another aspect in Germantown’s development, which was the increased involvement of professionals in many walks of life. It was not the business and civic leaders alone who held access to power any longer. The articulate community to which Magaziner referred was most evident in the growing number and influence of neighborhood and civic groups, which Germantown had always had in great number. In the 1960s, though, lack of coordination was not the sole explanation.

The growing number of neighborhood groups was enhanced by the maturing professional capacity in them, a factor made clear by the reactions to the Magaziner Plan. Professionalism now extended beyond architectural restoration and planning, taking form

in other sectors like community organizing. The various community groups, by virtue of the professionalism had become more analytical than before and they found ways to express it, whether historians, residents, or even organized gangs. It added up to a different type of interaction among business, social and neighborhood groups (and the consultants or professionals hired to speak on their behalf), which were now more numerous and more empowered. Or in the words of GCC director Delany describing the time, “Confrontation replaced consensus.” Even the catchphrase of the community of the council, “Unity in the Community,” was dropped.⁷⁶

By the mid-1960s, the Magaziner Plan called for \$1 million to enact the bypass, build a pedestrian walkway, and relocate some historic buildings into a small section of the Avenue between Walnut Lane and Tulpehocken, right where the old Colored Branch of the YWCA had been located. When presented to the community, the community’s opposition to it became the centerpiece of a cover story by Philadelphia *Magazine*, called “The Second Battle of Germantown.”

The efforts by Colonial Germantown Inc, to involve the Market Square project in the urban renewal planning had not succeeded, and it also rubbed significant members of the community the wrong way. The opposition included professionals, such as historians like Margaret Tinkcom, who stressed that the full life of the square superseded one narrow and idealized interpretation of it. Likewise, the Germantown Community Council

was no longer working as productively with Colonial Germantown on the efforts to realize the plans for the bypass and the Avenue's redevelopment.

Engaged by the Development Authority to build community support for the Magaziner Plan, Jack Hornung and Arthur Rosenlund of Colonial Germantown alienated important sectors of it. As more and more neighborhoods were empowering themselves in an effort to cope with change, Colonial Germantown avoided constituent cultivation like the plague. Flying in the face of examples of courting support from the community, Jack Hornung said, "You can't be democratic and get things done."⁷⁷ This not only summed up the interests of the commercial leaders like Rosenlund in attempting to use Colonial Germantown to address the need to revamp the Avenue, but it also became abundantly clear to the wider public as the plan was put forward to City Council in 1967.

Planning and the discussion of the various attempts to realize the Magainer Plan were frequently presented in community forums in 1965 and 1966, ten years after the initial planning had been drafted. As one observer wrote, "Plans and meetings about plans were almost as numerous as neighborhood groups."⁷⁸ Even with numerous community presentations of Magaziner's plan and the support of Germantown Community Council, though, the process of building community support was getting in the way. Germantown Council supported the urban renewal and even supported the bypass. One of the members of Colonial Germantown, however, Robert Anderson, was

one of its few board members who actually lived in German Township (he lived in West Mt. Airy). Anderson began to rally a “Citizens Committee” to oppose the final Magaziner plan for central Germantown. The Citizens Committee rounded up residents and small business owners who considered themselves deliberately shut out of the process that would ultimately serve the interests of a few, most notably the leadership of Colonial Germantown.⁷⁹

While the Germantown Community Council had originally endorsed the 1966 plan, “it wasn’t until they eventually got the traffic study that they began to doubt a proposed bypass was the answer to traffic and parking problems.”⁸⁰ This led the Community Council to train all its fire on the bypass. In response, the planning commission made clear that the plan was all or nothing. When the Redevelopment Authority’s community representative, Carol Buhr, resigned in protest in 1967, it was clear that the plan was not relating to the community very effectively. At the time it was said of her, “She agreed that the people weren’t taken into the confidence of the authorities and that this is what the fracas is really all about... It’s the classic case of the community worker who’s supposed to convince the public that a plan worked out for special interest is for them and then begins to side with the public.”⁸¹ The very process of fighting the plan was beginning to bring focus to a new generation of politically active Germantown residents, altering the composition of the community council to resist the

government's plan and address concerns facing black residents, such as police brutality and lack of input into education policy.

After sessions in which both sides offered testimony in City Hall, featuring loud and rancorous calls from supporters and opponents alike, the plan went down to defeat in City Council in October 1967.⁸² Technically the plan was amended to include more study and community input, but effectively the plan was not passed, nor would it be. The City Council resolution calling for the plan to be put back to community input was “believed to be the first legislation ever enacted in Philadelphia specifically recognizing the right of citizens to be involved in planning.”⁸³ The opposition to the plan had won the first round and the episode showed the power of the neighborhoods in Philadelphia.

Planners also lost the second round fight, as the federal government, in the form of the Housing and Urban Development agency, declared, in effect, “no roadway, no urban renewal.” This led City Council to re-vote quickly in order to submit the Magaziner Plan intact, with the hope that federal funds would be forthcoming. The response from Germantown was more combative. According to its former director, “The Germantown Community Council vowed to continue the fight to stop the now symbolic roadway.”⁸⁴ The fight took the form of a suit filed by the Community Council, together with four neighborhood organizations (one of which, the Wister Neighborhood Council, was formed specifically to fight the bypass) and several individuals in the path of the

bypass, against HUD and the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority on October 1969.

The case came to an end with the federal funding cuts in 1969 and 1970. By the end of the year, the Viet Nam War had altered federal priorities and urban renewal budgets were slashed regularly, with the Germantown plan put to rest entirely in 1972.⁸⁵

The whole episode demonstrated four ways in which professionals began to make their presence known in Germantown in the late 1950s and 1960s. First was the work of urban planners and architects with broad vision, such as Magaziner and the director of Colonial Germantown Inc., Jack Hornung, who reflected the thinking on the role of historic preservation in planning postwar Philadelphia.⁸⁶ Magaziner's thinking developed in association with the Philadelphia Planning Commission, including professional urban planners, such as Jack Kendree and Henry Churchill, who helped revise the plan written for "Concern for Germantown." Both of them did early work in Germantown before earning national reputations in the field of urban planning and design.⁸⁷ They worked out a lot of practical details analytically, unlike the early plans for Market Square envisioned by Brumbaugh and Rosenlund, who sought to build elaborate restorations and idealized colonial parks. The role of professionals continued the transfer of the role of enacting dreams for the reuse of Germantown's physical heritage, started in the 1930s with HABS work, from antiquarians, descendent families, and philanthropic groups to the work of the government.

In 1965, Jack Hornung presented a report on the Market Square project that outlined the progress toward the goals of the project, which by now had folded the Market Square project into the Magaziner Plan. The article, “Rebuilding Germantown: A Progress Report,” was published by the *Germantown Crier*, and opened with a quotation from the Bible that baldly stated the issue. “They shall rebuild the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the destinations of old; they shall renew the wasted cities.”⁸⁸ Using such stark comments to illustrate the problem of revitalizing Germantown also revealed the harsh tones in which the urban planners approached the project, devoid of sensitivity to the community, and one that made it hard to build consensus for the work that was undertaken by the project.

The report provided a list of the committee members overseeing the work which read like a group of interested parties drawn primarily from the large banks and businesses and realtors bordering the square. Their interests were the ones being addressed, not the good of the community. Nonetheless the progress report indicated the backing of the city, particularly of Philadelphia Mayor James Tate, in its plans. According to Hornung, Magaziner’s study, “constituted a necessary stage in the renewal process, produced many interesting and useful proposals and laid the ground work for the second major step in the process.”⁸⁹ That step would be the attempt to connect the plan with urban renewal in Germantown.

A second aspect of the professionalism evident in the community was the use of polling and marketing surveys to determine the extent of behaviors at work. This was evident in the planning conducted by Churchill and Kendree for Magaziner's Plan. Some of the data from studies like this wound their way into the Magaziner Plan, but only from the perspective of commercial owners on the Avenue. Other than data, the most salient features of residents of the community in the Magaziner Plan was among institutional leaders, most of whom were in the dark about concerted efforts to deal with the neighborhood's changes. "It is Concern for Germantown's hope, that it will be the instrument through which the institutions of Germantown can express the solidarity of their mutual interest. Quite a few leaders were interviewed in order to get their opinions about the future of Germantown and the part their particular institution might take in it. With three notable exceptions, most them had given little or no thought to the changing scene beyond registering awareness—and sometimes annoyance—at the 'racial problem'. This unawareness was startling, not to say shocking, coming from heads of institutions concerned with problems of social welfare, education and having a financial stake in the community."⁹⁰ The perception of issues like "racial problem" was important to consider and one study examined them in depth.

Simultaneously LaSalle College conducted surveys of its community in East Germantown as it considered expansion for the first time. A 1962 survey, *A Changing*

Neighborhood, was conducted by LaSalle's Department of Sociology.⁹¹ The fact that the school was involved in such a study was itself another example of scientific approaches used by some institutions to understand the community. The data reflected the growing sense among residents in lower and eastern Germantown that the neighborhood was changing, as of course it always had been, but the response suggested nuanced reads on the reasons for and responses to changes in the neighborhood. Issues of economic and social class distinctions among ethnic groups examined in the study revealed the tremendous diversity in Germantown. The level of discrimination the study uncovered revealed religious and social, not merely racial, prejudices, and by no means sustaining a purely racial divide.

In fact the study revealed a clouded picture of diffuse groups coping with change, and sometimes the rate of change was not as much as perceived. For instance, the perception that newcomers to the neighborhood were invading was reconsidered. "It is the conclusion of this study that although the 'invasion' is continuing, the rate has slackened and only a few blocks will become completely changed."⁹²

Likewise, the block by block analysis of the community showed that integration varied by block—testifying to the diffusion of sub-neighborhoods within Germantown as a whole. Other conclusions revealed that racial incidents were "surprisingly low" and that a "majority of both races claimed that they would personally work with members of

the other race to improve neighborhood conditions.”⁹³ Among the study’s recommendations was the creation, of course, of “a new organization, one that would attempt to utilize remaining area leadership for the purpose of fostering community among the resident.”⁹⁴ The work of neighborhood groups to address these conclusions was already very evident and they were working on a neighborhood by neighborhood basis, the study even singled out West Mt. Airy as one of the examples of where this was being done already.

Studies like “Concern for Germantown” and *A Changing Neighborhood* suggested, from an analytical level, that the stage was set for some kind of economic renewal; it just had to be managed by different groups to affect greater ability to cope with change. A third feature of the professionalization developed during the period as each community saw significant impact of neighborhood associations in planning. Social science and planning techniques to craft integrated approaches to housing became the norm. The many civic associations emerged or matured in response to racial change.⁹⁵

The German Township thus added to its already overcrowded landscape of civic and neighborhood organizations between 1950 and 1968. As population actually decreased, however, the total number of organizations (53) meant that the region averaged 6800 persons served per organization—an increase of over 30%. Likewise, of

the 53 civic organizations reported between 1950 and 1968, 31 of them were less than four years old.⁹⁶

While there were scattered attempts for this in Germantown, the nearby neighborhoods of East and West Mt. Airy (both located in German Township) became case studies for developing forward-thinking approaches to managing a changing neighborhood. That these efforts have been the basis of social scientific studies showed the success by some parts of the Township in accommodating sizeable demographic changes without violence or accelerated decline. The success of the West Mt. Airy Neighbors association in combating discriminatory housing and predatory real estate agents from driving down property values has been well documented.⁹⁷ The organization proved a path-breaking neighbors' association, which started in 1959 as a residents' advocacy group for the goal of maintaining integration.⁹⁸ Mt. Airy effectively came into its own during the 1950s and 1960s and separated itself from the fate of Germantown by maintaining stability, primarily through concerted neighborhood organization. There were many more, increasingly vocal civic organizations, whose voice would be distinctly heard from when the urban renewal plans began to work their way into political reality in Philadelphia City Council.

In Germantown, this included several different black community activists, such as David Richardson, Jr., who were young but effective, having been schooled by mentors

from North and West Philadelphia like Wilson Goode and Hardy Wilson in the civil rights movement of the 1960s.⁹⁹ The black community groups were most concerned with the plight of Germantown High School and police crackdowns on area gangs, but their overarching goal was greater involvement in decision-making power over issues that affected the black community.

David Richardson had been a staunch advocate of Black Power teachings about bringing unity among disparate African American groups for greater control over local affairs. In Germantown Richardson founded a social group called Young Afro-Americans (YAA), a group that had grown by calming fights at Germantown High School dances. Ultimately the YAA, along with similar groups like the Brickyard Youth Council and the Groovers, pushed for unity among Germantown's African Americans by mediating conflicts between local gangs, and which attempted to push for reforms at Germantown High—both groups bringing various levels of black empowerment ideas into neighborhood activism.¹⁰⁰ Using the discourse of black unity, with terms like “us” and “our people,” Richardson proved very effective at organizing the often disparate African-American community groups to protest against police brutality and school district policies. Ironically, Richardson demonstrated incredible leadership for Germantown by advocating for the needs of one sector of it.

It makes perfect sense that in Germantown even the civil rights movement would have to do with history. That the use of “us” and “our people” recalled the language of the 1913 Baugh survey of black Germantown was fitting, since the role of history was important to Richardson’s goals. He attempted to employ the discourse of racial unity to bridge divisions within the black student bodies, such as when the students organized a memorial service for Malcolm X during school hours and limited attendance to black students, teachers, and staff.¹⁰¹ Calling for more black history and black studies courses taught by black teachers, Richardson led a walk-out on November 17, 1967 of 200 Germantown High students that had been coordinated with other city high schools, such as South Philadelphia and Bok Vocational. By the time the 200 Germantown students had marched down Germantown Avenue, they were joined by students from Simon Gratz and many other high schools in the city. They all headed to the School District Main Administration Building, where they clashed with police. In the fracas Richardson was arrested.

In 1971, during a Philadelphia Teachers Union strike, Richardson developed a Germantown Area Schools Project as an alternative educational program for neighborhood children. At its core Richardson’s work sought to unify a previously fragmented black community for greater input in decisions affecting the community, and it started with education, including the teaching of history. Perhaps if the memory

infrastructure had been more inclusive, the efforts to push for black studies in schools in Germantown would have been less combative. The organizing efforts went to the heritage of one group that had been ignored, rather than the shared history. And while arguing for these issues about teaching history, the divisiveness of the Magaziner Plan served to remind black residents how little say they had in the plans for Germantown Avenue, prompting them to form an alliance with the others opposing the plan.

The difference between Germantown and Mt. Airy civic groups was that Mt. Airy could focus on one issue, housing, while Germantown had an over-abundance of issues preventing focus, such as crime, urban renewal, education, and many more. It led to separate goals for each group involved. Each group was able to consider the renewal plans on the basis of its own relationship to it, which meant that newly empowered civic groups like Richardson's were able to see the plan very differently than the elite, non-resident business leaders and their consultants intended. Even though the multiple Germantown community groups were diffuse, they rallied together in opposition to the Magaziner Plan.

Fourth among new professionals was the role of historians, as the Market Square project received serious criticism from professionals in the field of history and historic preservation. One of them was Margaret Tinkcom. By the mid 1960s Tinkcom blasted the Market Square project. In an article in the Germantown Historical Society's *Crier*,

she wrote that the idealized, romantic atmosphere that Colonial Germantown was trying to recreate had little basis in fact. Early tax records showed a busy market town and manufacturing center in colonial Germantown, not a sleepy rural village.

In 1966 she was commissioned to draft a historical analysis for Colonial Germantown—a full twenty years after the project was underway. Using archeological excavations in her findings, she pointed out that Market Square had been muddy and unkempt, with random paths worn across the square, not a crisply landscaped square. The following year she continued to weigh in against the proposed Colonial Germantown project in the historical society's journal, "All artificiality must be eschewed in planning its renewal. The square has too much solid worth to be turned into something pretty but phony. Such an approach would serve neither history nor Germantown in the long run."¹⁰²

Tinkcom emphasized the nineteenth century history and architecture in the square, including the role of the Morris family in landscaping it during the Victorian period. It put the Market Square project in the position of destroying public memory of one period to emphasize an idealized version of another. In other words, the chief historian of the city decried the plan and openly criticized it on professional historical grounds. Her study seriously eroded the support of the Redevelopment Authority for including the Market Square restoration in its urban renewal planning. The trend toward

bringing professional historians' input into Germantown would continue with regard to the opening of Germantown historic sites as museums.

The traditional Germantown community was now forever changed. The rise of more active residents forever altered the composition of the Germantown Community Council, with more members of it vocally challenging the authority of the council to speak on behalf of the community. A Black Caucus had formed within the board of directors of the council in late 1968. In May 1969 the chairman of the Black Caucus "presented problems confronting the black residents of Germantown and stated that if the council did not address itself to those problems by August, "The black members would see no reason to continue with the council."¹⁰³ This produced a co-directorship of the council, with one white and one black board chair sharing administrative control, a format that lasted only two years. By 1970, the council was more diverse than it had ever been, with its 38 members split evenly between black and white, and a composition of the council representing a cross section of the various groups within the neighborhood. Germantown Week had changed once again to become the Germantown People's Festival, a bi-cultural series of concerts that rose out of the need to address the deteriorating physical and social condition of Vernon Park.

In 1975, Colonial Germantown, Inc. held its final meeting at the Germantown Cricket Club (appropriately held at a famous Colonial Revival structure built for the

community's elite) and disbanded. It had run deficits and had trouble retaining board members.¹⁰⁴ The professional developers on behalf of the antiquarian, colonial revival vision for Market Square had lost out. There can be no doubt that Colonial Germantown Inc. had done a fair bit of work to shore up the appearance of the square, but it failed in its goal to affect a larger renewal of Germantown Avenue.

A letter drafted from the Central Germantown Council to the federal Health and Welfare Council in 1972 spoke to the Germantown's almost permanent condition of being opposed to regional planning. Written in regard to social services and funding for the poor, it could speak for much of Germantown's entire approach to planning, preservation, and multiple organizations without a concerted vision. "We are opposed to a regionalism defined and imposed by national and state agenda...it is important for a citizen-based planning agency to develop social planning out of the common concerns and imperatives and experiences of its constituent communities and to advocate such planning to the public authority."¹⁰⁵

As if written about the Model Cities program, the bypass, or urban renewal, the letter reflected the stubbornness of parochialism amid pressing needs and the willingness of Germantown's disparate leaders to accept pyrrhic victories over federal and state plans rather than affect meaningful change according to their own goals. The Germantown Community Council ended officially in 1981. Ironically, Germantown's sense of itself as

independent from Philadelphia had become a barrier to it being part of federal programs to develop the economy to overcome the decades-long decline. The opposition to the plan created the semblance of unity, so let us now examine what occurred in Germantown in place of the bypass plan.

Black Power Activism and Electoral Success

What was left after the end of Colonial Germantown and the end of the bypass was a consensus among black activists that liberal approaches to civil rights in northern cities were ineffective. For Germantown, the rejection of the bypass signaled the beginnings of success for its black leadership. Germantown versions of civil rights efforts, such as the YWCA's interracial committee or the 1949-1950 human relations commission, typified white liberal attempts, even if they involved prominent African Americans like Sadie T. Alexander. These efforts were tied to democratic machine politics in Philadelphia. So too the Benton Spruance-led community audit of 1949-50 involved Spruance's wife, a Democratic ward committee chair.¹⁰⁶ Blacks had seen struggles throughout the world wars, including the presence of KKK rallies in Philadelphia neighborhoods in the late 1920s and significant klan membership in Germantown into the 1940s.¹⁰⁷ Such racial conflicts as the 1944 Philadelphia Transit Company strike saw armed federal soldiers brought into make sure that blacks were

allowed to drive trolleys and buses over the objection of the striking union. In the 1950s and 1960s, housing pressures and de facto segregation practiced in many neighborhoods left few options to leave the city's declining job pool and crumbling housing stock. Even though the Philadelphia city charter was amended in 1948 to forbid discriminatory language in real estate advertising, the general climate seemed to fly in the face of guaranteed equality for blacks, if left to the reform and legal process controlled by whites.

The Philadelphia black community was certainly not unified, as social and geographic distinctions prevented people who migrated into the community from being fully accepted.¹⁰⁸ Black political power had resided within churches and local organizations, and the local NAACP was considered rife with in-fighting and ineffectiveness since it served the reformist approach. As the demographic shifts of white flight began to take effect in elections, blacks began to show greater political power in stimulating change within city government, but change was slow in coming, particularly to school reform and housing.

As already discussed, the 1950s and early 1960s saw several attempts by the federal government to facilitate private investment to affect change in the city, something it often did with big projects in cities. The Eisenhower era investment in urban renewal and the Model Cities program under the Johnson Administration stimulated planning for

major projects to stimulate housing projects and investment to counter blight. But the way the projects worked in the city meant that local political control, through community action committees, was stressed. The administration of Mayor Tate attempted to steer federal grants through as much local control as possible by giving administrative control to local social service organizations (like Germantown Settlement) and community action committees.¹⁰⁹ This did not fly with the federal government, which considered many of the local community action committees to be lacking in experience. Charges of racism against local community action committees and lawsuits in the late 1960s stymied progress on Model Cities. When the Nixon administration took over, rules were changed so that only local politicians could control the decisions regarding the programs. Not only was the investment not forthcoming, but the results also stoked the belief among black community organizers that meaningful reform on issues important to African Americans should and could not be left to local government or administrations as long as African Americans were not in the position to control the terms.

For Germantown this meant that the central refrain during the bypass issue among community organizers was that black community groups were not being heard. As historian Matthew Countryman described, “Thus in the last years of the 1960s, a new generation of black political activists who called themselves black independent

Democrats pursued political power as an explicit strategy for defending and advancing the achievement of the local Black Power movement.”¹¹⁰

By 1970, African-American community organizers began to push for greater representation in local elected office. An unsuccessful yet highly visible city-wide candidacy by black community organizer Hardy Williams received considerable attention about the promise of pushing the route of electoral power. Williams was served by Wilson Goode and was a long-time mentor to David Richardson. Richardson himself ran for state representative in 1972 against three-term Irish Catholic realtor Francis X. Rush. Richardson’s electoral victory was stunning. He carried Germantown’s district by 15% with incredible voter turnout, so much so that three of Richardson’s assistants were elected as ward committee chairs in Germantown. The same year, African Americans had achieved minority control over Germantown Settlement, changing the neighborhood’s largest social service agency from long-time Quaker control to that of African American population, led by Emmanuel Freeman. Now there was greater chance of African American control over decisions made by local politicians over poverty and housing from government programs. In 1972 Richardson proved that unity among the black community could be harnessed toward elected office and the sinews of power. He was only 23 years old.

When Richardson took office and with Germantown Settlement under what it called “minority control,” many of his programs were incorporated into the social agency. African-American social, educational and anti-poverty programs had support from the Germantown representative in the state capital. For instance the Germantown Area Schools Project and other programs for housing and anti-poverty became run out of Germantown Settlement.¹¹¹ During the 1970s and 1980s Richardson and Freeman were able to steer Germantown Settlement into the chief vehicle of state funds into Germantown supporting Richardson’s vision for the black community, ultimately including the Germantown Housing Development Corporation and the Central Germantown Council.¹¹²

While this was an example of considerable leadership that coordinated a heretofore disparate group in Germantown, it did not incorporate similar organizations or bring groups from outside the African-American community. The many other youth-serving or anti-poverty groups, or programs run by churches, had a hard time getting around Settlement for funding from state and city agencies. The continual tension of coordinating the many groups meant that what had succeeded for one group, Germantown’s African Americans, did not go far enough to serve the needs of the entire neighborhood. Richardson’s leadership skills, ironically, served a narrow, albeit large, segment of the Germantown community rather than all of it.

The successful rise of black political leadership in Germantown coincided with the rejection of the bypass. The inability to consult with African American community groups was a loudly proclaimed reason for the bypass's rejection, but the fact was that the bypass typified the kind of program where decisions had been made before bringing them to the public. The tenor of the public opinion, whites as well as blacks, would not stand for a major redrawing of the neighborhood to be pushed through without the appearance of a more open process. The ability of the white elite of the neighborhood to assert its control over the community was at an end. And the real importance of the period is that it ushered in black leadership in the neighborhood's decision-making bodies that stressed black unity at the expense of white support. That it ushered Richardson and Freeman into authority, which became secured for three decades, was a success for African Americans in Germantown, lending a thread of stability to a large measure of the population that had been lacking it. The success did not, however, bring any greater leadership or focus to the multiple groups of Germantown, only enhanced power to one.

Longing for a Spark: New Museums, New Energy in Old Sites

The bypass issue left lingering resentments and the community longing for some economic spark. After the rejection of the bypass, Germantown continued to look to creative professionals or other leaders to find other ways to move Germantown forward,

particularly involving projects related to preservation. The 1970s saw many energetic attempts that included the pedestrian Maplewood Mall, a new library, two “new” museums, and even new plans for development along Germantown Avenue, all hailed as harbingers of something different. It seemed as if old, tried and true ways were being rejected as a matter of course; a lot of energy was marshaled by some in the business community interested in finding any project that could serve to revitalize the historic neighborhood. The question remained, though, about how sustainable efforts could really be in a community so divided. With little coordination of the entire neighborhood’s efforts, how could efforts of those in the business or historical community be able to generate the momentum needed to turn the fortunes of Germantown around?

There were several projects that were hailed as just the thing needed to bring about Germantown’s revitalization. The first was the Maplewood Mall project, which began planning in 1971 and opened during the Bicentennial year, 1976. “Mall Plan could Herald Germantown Revival” trumpeted the local newspaper, indicating the hope with which the project was greeted. The mall provided a two-block pedestrian zone just off of the main shopping district with small shops, crafts stores, and boutiques.¹¹³ The project used city funds through grants from the city’s Redevelopment Authority and was coordinated by the Germantown Community Council. It resembled similar projects in other parts of Philadelphia.

Likewise, in the mid-1970s a new library was built when the Carnegie Library in Vernon Park had become too small, when the building was incorporated into a senior center. The library took the place of an ornate Victorian building, leading to some discussion of its preservation. Ultimately the Victorian building was torn down so a modern regional library was constructed in its place. “The building simply is in bad shape and doesn’t meet the size needs of the library,” indicated a spokesman of the Central Germantown Council, Gray Smith. The project presented another example of the complications of so much history with little coordinated planning approved by community input.

Henry Magaziner weighed in, from his role with the Maxwell Mansion, Germantown’s Victorian house museum, “We can’t just save everything that’s old and quaint. We need a library and we are not going to find open land to put it on. While we do have to save fine examples of Victorian architecture, we shouldn’t save buildings just because they are Victorian.” Others concurred, but from the standpoint of creating some kind of development momentum for the neighborhood. “The regional library could be the spark that could put the commercial center of Germantown back on its feet,” Gray Smith said. He argued that the city was missing its chance to assist the construction in a way that stimulated business and argued that once again that Germantown would lose due to the struggles between the city planning commission, the redevelopment authority, and

the community. “The Germantown Community Council suggests that if the city and its authorities can find several million dollars to build a bypass, then they can find the fund necessary for the library.”¹¹⁴ The city did and the library opened in 1978 as the Joseph Coleman Northwest Regional Library.

Others looked to the opening of two new house museums for the spark. 1972 and 1973 saw professionally trained curators and conservators take up roles in the house museums of Germantown. The opening of two nationally-known historic houses, Cliveden and Wyck, took their place among the number of house museums, but with the distinction of having professional capacity and expert staff in the development of programs and preservation strategies for some of the oldest and most famous houses—the scenes of some of the greatest moments in Germantown.

This represented a turning point for the historical community. Professionalism officially took a day to day role in Germantown history only in 1972 and 1973. Unlike the other house museums, which were staffed by volunteers who were often descendents, or who highlighted specific and exclusive stewardship, such as the Colonial Dames, Cliveden and Wyck represented sites with the first professional curatorial staff to work in Germantown full time. Even the Germantown Historical Society had a part-time administrator to assist with office work and offer tours and programs in 1974.¹¹⁵ The private homes became public museums, and often the professionals lived at the historic

sites. The degree to which private approaches would be reflected in public museum work was a question from the outset.

Even though the sites were steeped in the eighteenth-century colonial history with collections famous for their connections to Philadelphia's and Germantown's founding families, both Cliveden and Wyck had been lived in as homes well into the 1970s. Unlike the hermetically sealed, preserved status of other house museums, both Cliveden and Wyck, because of their use of professional staffs from the outset, came to be known more for the active study of the homes within a changing context than for the preservation of one particular period. It signaled another way in which the traditional, antiquarian historical community was no longer calling the shots. A generation preserving a way of life of a specific group gave way to a group of professionals who were equipped to catalogue and conserve the collections and attempt to connect them to the community—by virtue of their professional qualifications, not of their associations with descendent or familial groups.

Cliveden, located at the crest of Germantown Avenue where it turns into Mt. Airy, had been routinely considered a site of national importance due to its role in the 1777 Battle of Germantown.¹¹⁶ During the twentieth century a string of Chew descendents lived at Cliveden and carried well the responsibilities of maintaining and preserving the historic site. Some made use of their professional capacities to enhance

the national reputation of the family homestead. Sam Chew, for instance, was an advertising executive who lived at Cliveden in the 1940s and 1950s and who secured prominent press attention for Cliveden with stories about the collections in *Vogue* and *The Magazine Antiques*.¹¹⁷ He and his wife began consulting with Henry Francis DuPont about renovations to Cliveden in 1958, based on DuPont's work at Wintherthur and later the White House.¹¹⁸ They renovated the house in ways that were visually sympathetic with eighteenth century approaches, and in some cases he went to great lengths to replicate certain features, like the beveling on floors and other details. Nonetheless he also added features, such as a swimming pool and a flagstone terrace, more in keeping with 1960s suburban living than historic preservation.

Samuel Chew's concern about Cliveden and the growing costs of its upkeep concerned him, as his son lived in California. In 1972 the Chews turned over Cliveden to become the tenth historic property of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The president of the National Trust during this period was James Biddle, who served from 1968 to 1980. According to Chew family history, Biddle suggested to Chew at a casual cocktail party that the National Trust for Historic Preservation would make a suitable, public, and national steward for the site. Sam Chew reportedly declined, having concluded that the site should remain in family hands. But in 1970 an arson fire seriously damaged the carriage house on the Cliveden property along with many artifacts of

historic value. This prompted the Chews, now more concerned with the safety of the house, to consider a larger organization to care for the preservation of the site. Coming from a Philadelphia family even more storied than the Chews, Biddle succeeded where others had failed and persuaded the family to donate the house to the National Trust. The old social network among elite families was able to draw on some of the new tools that the profession of historic preservation had now made available.

Before coming to head the National Trust, Biddle had been chief curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, and an advisor to Henry DuPont in the restoration of the White House, which brought him closer to the discussions involving First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy and historic preservation and conservation.¹¹⁹ Biddle suggested that the property might be best preserved under the auspices of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Sam Chew, not unlike his ancestor in 1901, preferred to keep the house in family hands, that is until the fire. Negotiations included funds being raised to overcome the potential hurdle of family financial obligations to the property. The first director of Cliveden was the former curator of American furnishings at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Raymond Shepherd. In many ways curatorial issues were the largest concern of the first generation of staffs in historic sites during the postwar period. After a year of intensive documentation and inventory, the house was opened to the public as a museum in spring 1973, becoming Germantown's eighth house museum.

Raymond Shepherd insisted on a thorough inventory of the collections and documents, over 200,000 of them, delaying the opening of the site to the public until the spring of 1973. When museums opened up in this period, the professional advice was to take control within the site and shape the management of the message about the site within its neighborhood context. For Cliveden and Wyck, this represented professional curatorial expertise helping shape each site's history within the neighborhood.

Wyck is one of the oldest extant homes in Philadelphia, built in 1690, and has remained in the Haines family for nine generations.¹²⁰ A crucial aspect of Wyck's opening was that it was described as something other than a museum. Wyck emphasized the non-museum, since that would be in keeping with the family's wishes to present a place that emphasized continuity, something other than the artifacts. In 1973 Wyck, located three blocks south of Cliveden on Germantown Avenue, became a charitable organization to oversee the maintenance of the house, after the descendants gave over the control of the estate to a trust managed by the First Philadelphia Bank and Trust Company.¹²¹ Originally its directors were called "administrators" even though they were essentially curator-directors. Wyck's first such professional was Sandra MacKenzie.

The Germantown Historical Society report on the opening of Wyck (along with Cliveden and Deshler-Morris, considered the three most famous houses in Germantown) included the declaration, "It will not be a museum. It will be maintained in the spirit of

those who lived there for over two hundred years as members of the Society of Friends.”¹²² To cultivate the spirit and not be a museum required something a little different, particularly the effort to catalogue the 100,000 documents and 10,000 artifacts at Wyck.¹²³ And from the outset, both Cliveden and Wyck attempted to function as historic sites with connections with something larger.

In Wyck’s case this was the family’s context in changing times, as it had been reflected by the house. This meant more update and historical analysis of the changing contexts, not a hermetically sealed history of one specific period, which had been the staple of the house museums in Germantown since Stenton in 1900. For instance, Stenton and the museums of the Germantown Historical Society used mannequins and specific periodization to maintain things in a time-controlled sense of the house at a certain date, rather than a portray a house that had existed for centuries with people who did not see themselves as museum pieces.¹²⁴

Wyck’s curatorial approach therefore sought out a team of talented historic preservationists, with the board of directors guiding a mission based on intensive study of the building and the family over time. The first non-Haines family member to serve as chair of the Wyck board of directors was Margaret Tinkcom. Cliveden’s curatorial approach, by comparison, sought to make known the regional concentration of the National Trust’s mission to preserve sites with revealing examples of national

architectural and historical resonance. A regional office of the National Trust was established at Cliveden. This meant Cliveden served as an example for establishing a way for preservation to prevent destruction of historic resources by development. The administrators at both Wyck and Cliveden worked in the first years on cataloguing the collections and getting the word out that tours were available. They also pushed to have the sites interpreted based upon the initial research, inventory and cataloguing so that the stories of the sites could be presented as part of the city's bicentennial celebration in 1976. In light of the security concerns of Mayor Rizzo, however, the bicentennial events in Philadelphia and in Germantown were subdued compared with festivals and anniversaries of previous years.¹²⁵ In 1977, Cliveden offered a reenactment celebrating the bicentennial of the Battle of Germantown, and Wyck made headlines with a visit from a descendent of the Marquis de Lafayette to the sites visited by Lafayette in 1825.

Philadelphia historian Roger Moss wrote that the one word most associated with Wyck is "continuity." The family lived at the home for centuries and so carefully took care of its connections to architectural and natural history, that its original Wistar glass, the renovations by famous architect William Strickland, and its historic rose gardens all stand out for their steadfast witness to the legacy of a way of life that made preservation a priority. Both Cliveden and Wyck embodied a certain level of continuity with the past, as all the historic houses of Germantown testified to preservation as an ethic at work in

Germantown. Wyck's early board of directors, though, emphasized the Wistar-Haines family's beliefs as reflected in material culture, not a celebration of the family's wealth. While Cliveden's board sought to interpret the house as a reflection of how a powerful family preserved its connections to the American Revolution as reflected in the house and its collections over the centuries. To the staffs of each site, emphasizing how various generations of the families approached preserving the past deviated from what has been described as the hero-worship of the founders as revealed by the Colonial Dames at Stenton.¹²⁶ It did, however, keep the bright lights of what was remembered in Germantown shining on the colonial and revolutionary heritage and how its role changed over time.

Having paid staff made this somewhat discontinuous. The presence of regular professional staff working with the historical community began to add a different focus and with it the potential to engage the community differently. With the utter rejection of the renewal plan and the desire for an idealized colonial Germantown, the community looked at the colonial sites as vestiges of an elite, white Protestant social set with little connection to late twentieth century Germantown. In the course of working in Germantown, the professionals who came to work in the 1970s began to work more and more with community groups and other partners for marketing, tours, and contractors to work on the buildings and landscapes. It was not long before the professional staffs

beginning to populate Germantown's historical community completed the preliminary curatorial work of the museum and sought to expand the work of each site outward to the community.

As a result, the 1970s saw considerable business support of history and preservation that utilized the new professionals working in the museums of Germantown. Two of the neighborhood's oldest businesses provided financial, promotional, and volunteer support for Germantown history. Asher's Candies sponsored a reenactment of the Battle of Germantown on the Cliveden grounds in 1977 with hundreds of soldiers that attracted thousands of visitors. Asher's did so because its founder, C.A. Asher, participated in the first ever reenactment in 1927. Kirk and Nice Funeral Home played on its past, it was founded in 1761, and billed itself the "oldest funeral home in America." Its director, Malcolm Henderson, supported Germantown history by managing the Concord Schoolhouse and promoting Germantown through its history in ways reflective of the 1930s Colonial Revivalism. Decorations within the funeral home included historic photographs and glimpses of what the neighborhood looked like in the old days when the funeral company had been an important fixture in the neighborhood. While business ties celebrated colonial history, as they had since the 1920s, each showed how that the business was a way to explain the development of the neighborhood.

Another plan for development in the late 1970s brought both the historic and business communities another glimmer of hope. Effectively presented in professional *charrettes*, or architectural teaching workshops, the plan featured landscape design, retail development and coordinated design of historic facades.¹²⁷ Presented to several of the neighborhood groups and the Germantown Business Association, the plan garnered community support for its tailored vision, as opposed to the bypass which had called for tearing and reshaping the Avenue entirely. The plan, however, was ultimately rejected in political channels between the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority and the City Council. Sources at the time argued that the right people were not included early enough in the process to gain its approval and the plan went away after garnering neighborhood excitement. Without a coordinating body at work for the variety of interests at work, the support of many in the community did not effectively translate into sufficient political advocacy in City Hall.

As the neighborhood's population and business climate began to decline further in the 1980s, it would be up to professionals from the history community to attempt to get different groups to talk to one another and build, ever so slowly, a shared history of Germantown.

Conclusion

The 1950s and 1960s saw two major events in Germantown. First was the presentation and ultimate rejection of a kind of urbanism pushed for by professional planners. Second was the emergence of and struggle for power by the black community to gain power over the community levers of influence. The process of securing the latter helped the neighborhood reject the former, with the help of plenty of white residents who rejected the Model Cities approach to remake Germantown Avenue. Unlike other parts of Philadelphia where the urban renewal projects were carried out, such as Society Hill and West Philadelphia, however, Germantown had no coordinating agency with such power to address the effects of the plans on the curatorial and urbanist strands of activity in the neighborhood. As with most of the century, there was little in the way of coordination of the various strands, and therefore no true leadership on behalf of the planning within the community. Colonial Germantown, Inc. proved too alienating and the Germantown Community Council was too divided from within by the competing voices of all the different organizations.

In rejecting the bypass plan, however, the victory was an assertion of power to stop it, not a statement of leadership or coordination for other planning efforts. When ideas for funding big projects went away, the fragile coalition broke up and Germantown declined even more. By insisting that issues like the bypass were struggles for power, the

activists often treated the other members of the coalition as enemies to be fought, rather than allies to be cultivated whose common goals could be steered in the same direction. This ultimately brought few lasting alliances between blacks and whites in historic preservation in Germantown.

The energy of the 1970s provided good examples of preservation projects, many of them creative attempts to address needs ranging from conservation to community revitalization. Without the shared history or coordination to moderate competing groups, however, the efforts amounted to isolated work with few sustainable results. Within the neighborhood it had long been easy for splintered groups to pursue their own course. Specific groups sought to establish control within their own vision of the neighborhood. The leaders trained their efforts on making the most for their segment of the divided community. Some groups went toward having power in the process, some for plans to bring modern urbanism to the Avenue, and some toward a curatorial voice in what could be preserved. In spite of many creative approaches by established and new sectors of the community, only very seldom would the entire community be served by a shared vision. So much of the history was presented in isolated pockets which emphasized one period or one group or one certain family.

As will be shown in the next chapter, the 1980s and 1990s saw the memory infrastructure begin to expand with the growing input of professional museum staffs,

allowing people to welcome projects which took the historic houses out of their private sphere and into the public realm where they were truly needed.

¹ See population analysis of the entire German Township in Barbara Ferman, Theresa Singleton, and Don Demarco, "West Mount Airy, Philadelphia" in *Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research* 4:2 (1999): 30

² Henry J. Magaziner, "Germantown Avenue in Germantown," May 1952, a report written for the community group, "Concern for Germantown." This was a short concept paper. *A Proposal for the Revitalization of the Heart of Germantown* expanded it and was revised in 1956. Both were prepared for Philadelphia Planning commission on behalf of the voluntary civic group, "Concern for Germantown" Located in "Germantown Civic Groups," Box 30, Folder 13. Temple Urban Archives.

³ Francis X. Delany, "Germantown and Its Civic Organizations 1946-1981: A Community in Search of Effective Form," *Germantown Crier* 52:1 (Spring 2000): 13. Delany (1937-2000) was a longtime Germantown community organizer during the 1960s through 1980s.

⁴ Alison Isenberg, *Downtown America: A History of the Place and the People Who Made It* (University of Chicago Press, 2004).

⁵ Delany, 13.

⁶ *Ibid*, 1.

⁷ Magaziner, *A Proposal for the Revitalization of the Heart of Germantown*, 3.

⁸ *Ibid*, 2.

⁹ Henry Magaziner, "Areas of Opportunity for Renewal of Germantown", Part 2 of the "Study of Central Germantown for the Philadelphia City Planning Commission." March 1964, 35.

¹⁰ On the relocation of historic buildings and the creation of a new shopping district, see *Ibid*, 11, 30-35.

¹¹ *Ibid*, 3.

¹² *Ibid*.

¹³ *Ibid*, 45.

¹⁴ Wallace, "Visiting the Past: History Museums in the United States," *Presenting the Past : Critical Perspectives on History and the Public*, edited by Susan Porter Benson, Steven Brier, and Roy Rosenzweig. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986) 153-154.

¹⁵ For instance, see Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

¹⁶ Urban renewal programs had been set in motion during the late 1940s and early 1950s in such a way that, "Rather than solve the urban crisis, urban renewal had set the stage for its next phase." Arnold R. Hirsch, "Urban Renewal," in *The Encyclopedia of Chicago* (Chicago: Newberry Library and Chicago Historical Society, 2004): 1295.

¹⁷ Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton University Press, 1998): 262-265.

¹⁸ Clarence N. Stone, *Regime Politics: Governing Atlanta, 1946-1988* (University of Kansas Press, 1989): 190-195.

¹⁹ James Robert Saunders, Renae Nadine Shackelford, *Urban Renewal and the End of Black Culture in Charlottesville, Virginia: An Oral History of Vinegar Hill* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1998): 87-110.

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- ²⁰ On the funding aspects of Philadelphia urban renewal, see Countryman, *Up South*, 300-307.
- ²¹ For an oral history of residents, see *The Forgotten Bottom Remembered: Stories from A Philadelphia Neighborhood* (Philadelphia New City Press 2002).
- ²² On Society Hill's urban renewal process, see Alice Sparberg Alexiou, *Jane Jacobs: Urban Visionary* (Rutgers University Press, 2006): 39-40.
- ²³ See Joseph S. Clark, Jr. and Dennis J. Clark, "Rally and Relapse 1946-1968," in *Philadelphia: A 300 Year History* (Philadelphia 1982): 678. On urban renewal, see 662-665.
- ²⁴ Matthew J. Countryman, *Up South: Civil Rights and Black Power in Philadelphia* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005): 223-255.
- ²⁵ Clark and Clark, 662.
- ²⁶ Michael Wallace, "Reflections on the History of Historic Preservation," in *Presenting the Past : Critical Perspectives on History and the Public*, edited by Susan Porter Benson, Steven Brier, and Roy Rosenzweig. (Philadelphia : Temple University Press, 1986): 183-184.
- ²⁷ Wallace, 184.
- ²⁸ Wallace, 183.
- ²⁹ Quoted in Countryman, 307.
- ³⁰ Michael deHaven Newsom, "Blacks in Preservation", in *Law and Contemporary Problems* 36 (Summer 1971): 428-429.
- ³¹ Isenberg, 7.
- ³² 1950 US Census. The overall population of the Township was 113,000. Germantown Historical Society, Historian's Report, 1950, quoted in David Contosta, "Philadelphia's 'Miniature Williamsburg': The Colonial Revival and Germantown's Market Square", *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 120: 4 (October 1996): 301.
- ³³ Roger Moss, *Historic Houses of Philadelphia* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998): 13-14.
- ³⁴ *Ibid*, 14.
- ³⁵ See Contosta, "Philadelphia's 'Miniature Williamsburg'", 312.
- ³⁶ Germantown Historical Society minutes, May 27, 1971.
- ³⁷ See Karolin Frank, "Historic Preservation in Philadelphia," in Karolin Frank and Patricia Petersen, *Historic Preservation in the USA* (Berlin: Springer, 2002), 102.
- ³⁸ Harry M. Tinkcom, Margaret B. Tinkcom, and Grant Miles Simon, *Historic Germantown: From the Founding to the Early Part of the Nineteenth Century, A Survey of the German Township* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1955). It also included colonial structures in Mt. Airy and Chestnut Hill.
- ³⁹ From Margaret B. Tinkcom, "The Philadelphia Historical Commission: Organization and Procedures" in *Law and Contemporary Problems*, Vol. 36, No. 3, "Historic Preservation" (Summer, 1971), pp. 386-397.
- ⁴⁰ On preservation legislation and historical commissions in other locations, see Max Page and Randall Mason, eds. *Giving Preservation a History: Histories of Historic Preservation in the United States* (Routledge, 2004), 81-184, and Norman Tyler, *Historic Preservation: An Introduction to its History, Principles, and Practice* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000).
- ⁴¹ Moss, *Historic Houses of Philadelphia*, 128-130.
- ⁴² On the history of the preservation movement, see for instance, Charles B. Hosmer, Jr. *Preservation Comes of Age: From Williamsburg to the National Trust, 1926-1949* (, and William J. Murtaugh, *Keeping Time: The History and Theory of Preservation in America*. 3rd ed. (Hoboken: Wiley and Sons, 2006).
- ⁴³ On New York City, see for instance, Randall Mason, "Historic Preservation, Public Memory and the Making of Modern New York," in Page and Mason, eds. *Giving Preservation a History*, 131-162. On the role of saving Lafayette Square in the movement toward national preservation legislation, see Robert R.

Weyeneth, "Decatur House and the History of Historic Preservation in the United States" (Prepared for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2007): 7-15.

⁴⁴ By 1959, there were 75 buildings in Germantown, Mt. Airy and Chestnut Hill listed by the Philadelphia Historical Commission. See the report, *Historic Buildings Recommended for Preservation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission* (Philadelphia Historical Commission, 1959): 64-67.

⁴⁵ From a copy of the original nomination documents as submitted to the National Park Service/National Register, October 15, 1966.

⁴⁶ For this period a partial listing includes the following studies located in the Temple Urban Archives Pamphlet Collection: GERMANTOWN, A PLANNING STUDY. By Henry Churchill for the Philadelphia City Planning Commission. 1956. Appendices and maps; GERMANTOWN AND MOUNT AIRY, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA: COMMUNITY SURVEY. Conducted and edited by Marvin H. Eckardt. Revised to September 1964; GERMANTOWN CONTROL AREA (CENSUS TRACT 22 Y). Housing and Neighborhood Conditions and Opinions and Attitudes of the Residents. Preliminary Report. Philadelphia Department of Public Health. 1958; GERMANTOWN ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEY. Philadelphia City Planning Commission and Philadelphia Housing Association. 1945; GERMANTOWN HOUSING PROJECT. Philadelphia Housing Authority. ca. 1940; GERMANTOWN LEADERSHIP AREA. Housing and neighborhood conditions: opinions and attitudes of the residents. Department of Public Health of Philadelphia. 1955; GERMANTOWN LEADERSHIP AREA PROGRAM SUMMARY REPORT. Prepared by Germantown Settlement. 1956; GERMANTOWN... MUSEUM OR MISSION. Church of the Brethren. No date; GERMANTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AREA. Philadelphia City Planning Commission. 1963; GERMANTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN. Philadelphia. City Planning Commission. 1967; GERMANTOWN SCHOOLS PROJECT. Report to Board of Education by SUA, Incorporated. 1965; THE GERMANTOWN SEMINARS. Physical Planning Division of the Germantown Community Council, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. 1962; A MARKET ANALYSIS OF THE GERMANTOWN AREA. 1962.

⁴⁷ Isenberg, *Downtown*, 164-165, who describes efforts to restore a historic look to commercial buildings in downtowns as something that started in the 1970s, where the trend in the 1950s was to modernize older buildings.

⁴⁸ Contosta, "Philadelphia's 'Miniature Williamsburg'", 311-312.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 304-305.

⁵⁰ Jack Hornung (1932-2005) was Harvard-educated and worked in urban planning in Philadelphia in the 1960s and 1970s before settling in the Pacific Northwest. He co-wrote, *The Citizen's Guide to Urban Renewal*, with Alfred P. Van Huyck (Chandler-Davis Pub. Co., 1962). See also, Jake Ellison "Jack Hornung: Urban planner helped set up greenway corridor," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, July 4, 2005

⁵¹ Henry Churchill, "Germantown: A Planning Study for the Philadelphia City Planning Commission. 1956.

⁵² The sponsoring organizations listed included, as of June 3 1959: First Methodist Church, Unitarian Church of Germantown, Germantown Historical Society, Colonial Germantown Market Square, Inc., Lankenau (Public) School, William Penn Charter School, Germantown Friends School, Wissahickon Boys Club, Coulter Street Friends Meeting, Friends Free Library, Faith Presbyterian Church, Second Presbyterian Church, Germantown Jewish Center, YWCA, Greene Street Friends School, and School House Lane Friends Meeting.

⁵³ Henry Churchill, Jack M. Kendree, and Ty Learn "A Preliminary Study for Germantown: An extension and updating of a study of part of Germantown in 1956 for the planning Commission of Philadelphia" (June 1959, revised 1960): Map No. 12.

⁵⁴ Henry Magaziner, "Study of Central Germantown for the Philadelphia City Planning Commission," May 1963, and Henry Magaziner, "Areas of Opportunity for Renewal of Germantown: Part Two of the Study of Central Germantown for the City Planning," Commission, March 1964.

⁵⁵ Magaziner, "A Preliminary Study of Germantown prepared for *Concern for Germantown*," 1960, p. 9.

⁵⁶ Magaziner, "Study of Central Germantown," 35.

⁵⁷ Just a sampling of the community reaction included Germantown Community Council president Robert Boynton saying "Insufficient study has been made for the bypass and that it won't solve the problems that the planners say it will solve," in "Community Council Will Fight for Renewal," *Germantown Courier*, July 6, 1967, and "Traffic flow is estimated to increase by 22% by 1985," quoted in "Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority Approves Central Germantown Renewal" the *Germantown Courier*, July 27, 1967; and "East Mt. Airy Opposes the Bypass," *Germantown Courier*, August 31, 1967.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 36.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*,

⁶⁰ Delany, 14.

⁶¹ Magaziner, "Study of Central Germantown for the Philadelphia City Planning Commission," May 1963, 1.

⁶² Henry Magaziner, "A Preliminary Study of Germantown prepared for *Concern for Germantown*, an extension and updating of a study of part of Germantown made in 1956 for the planning commission of Philadelphia," 1959, revised February 1960, 38-39.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁶⁴ Magaziner, "A Preliminary Study of Germantown prepared for *Concern for Germantown*," February 1960, p. 12.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 39-40.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 11-12.

⁶⁷ William Will, "The Germantown Renewal Program of 1958-1968: A First Hand Account," *Germantown Crier* 52:1 (Spring 2002), 25.

⁶⁸ Delany, 15.

⁶⁹ Nancy Love, "The Second Battle of Germantown," *Philadelphia Magazine*, (September 1967): 107.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 110.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 43-45.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 46.

⁷³ Quoted in Delany, 12. For the rest of the Germantown Township, the change was equally rapid. East Mt. Airy was 32.5% black in 1960 and changed to 56% black by 1970 and by 1990 was 75% black. West Mt. Airy was 19% black in 1959, in 1970 38% black, and 46% by 1980. See Juliet Saltman, "A Fragile Movement: The Struggle for Neighborhood Stabilization," *Contributions in Sociology: 86* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990): 295-300.

⁷⁴ Delany, 15.

⁷⁵ Magaziner, "A Preliminary Study of Germantown prepared for *Concern for Germantown*," 1960, p. 45.

⁷⁶ Delany, 14.

⁷⁷ Delany, 17.

⁷⁸ Delany, 16.

⁷⁹ It turned out they were right about being deliberately shut out, since the newspapers in Germantown only reported one version of the planning process. The response against the plan, while gaining steam against some, was not accurately portrayed in the *Germantown Courier*, which had for years "clamped a lid on unfavorable coverage of urban renewal." This was in response to a request from Jack Hornung and

Colonial Germantown for more fair treatment; and considering the amount of advertising the group spent on the paper, one report concluded that Hornung was able to make its wishes for favorable coverage real. Delany, 17 and Love, 112.

⁸⁰ Love, 107.

⁸¹ Love, 108.

⁸² “City Council Holds Two Day Hearing On Central Gtn. Renewal.” *Germantown Courier* (September 14, 1967): 1-12.

⁸³ Quoted in “City Council Passes Amended Renewal Bill”, *Germantown Courier*, October 12, 1967. See also Contosta, 317.

⁸⁴ Delany, 19-20.

⁸⁵ Margaret Halsey “Rittenhouse Bypass Could Be Killed by City”, *Philadelphia Bulletin*, 14 May 1972; Delany, 19-20; also, “Neighborhood Development Program 1970”, Records of the Wister Area Committee, Temple Urban Archives, Accession 343, Series II, Boxes 1 and 2.

⁸⁶ On Magaziner’s influence in the Philadelphia preservation community, for instance, see Samuel Y. Harris, *Building Pathology: Deterioration, Diagnostics, and Intervention* (John Wiley and Sons, 2001): xiii.

⁸⁷ On Kendree see, Tim Venable “Development Veterans Reflect on Field’s Past, Present and Future,” in *The Development Alliance*, 1990. Also, Henry Churchill, *The City is the People* (1945, rev. 1962). Also Henry S. Churchill Papers, #2347. Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

⁸⁸ The quotation is from Isaiah 61:4, cited in “Rebuilding Germantown: A Progress Report ... March 1965,” found in *Germantown Crier*, March 1965.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ Magaziner, 1960, p. 6.

⁹¹ Brother Augustine, *A Changing Neighborhood*, LaSalle College Department of Sociology, 1962.

⁹² *A Changing Neighborhood*, 67-68.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 69-70.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁹⁵ See, “The Persistent Dualism: Centralization and Decentralization in Philadelphia, 1854-1975” by William W. Cutler, III in Cutler and Gillette, eds., *The Divided Metropolis: Social and Spatial Dimensions of Philadelphia, 1800-1975* (Greenwood Press, 1980):249-277.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 274.

⁹⁷ See Barbara Ferman, Theresa Singleton, and Don Demarco “West Mt. Airy Philadelphia”, *Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research*, 1998 4:2, 29-59; also, Juliet Saltman, “A Fragile Movement: The Struggle for Neighborhood Stabilization,” *Contributions in Sociology: 86* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990): 295-300; also Leonard Franklin Heumann, “The Definition and Analysis of Stable Racial Integration: The Case of West Mt. Airy, Philadelphia” (Unpublished dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, 1973).

⁹⁸ Heumann, Chapter Two, and Saltman, 295-297.

⁹⁹ See Countryman, *Up South: 223-255*.

¹⁰⁰ Countryman, *Up South*, 242-243 and Delany, 15 and 20, who based his study on oral histories of African American community organizers in 1977.

¹⁰¹ Countryman, *Up South*, 242-243, and 317-318.

¹⁰² Margaret B. Tinkcom, “Market Square,” *Crier* 19 (1967): 75. See also, Contosta, 315.

¹⁰³ Minutes of the Board of Directors of the Germantown Community Council, 22 May 1969.

Quaker Material Culture in Eighteenth-Century Historic Site Interpretation,” in *Quaker Aesthetics: Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption*, Emma J. Lapsansky and Anne A. Verplank eds. (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003): 287-300.

¹²⁵ Ronnie L. Cook, “A Bicentennial that Never Happened: It’s 1976 but Plans for a Celebration Fizzled,” *Germantown Courier*, 8 January 1976.

¹²⁶ Diethorn “What’s Real?”, 287-300.

¹²⁷ “Germantown Avenue: High Street to Allen’s Lane: Sketch Development Plan”, prepared for East Mt. Airy Neighbors, Germantown Ave. Merchants Association, Greater Morton Civic Association, and West Mt. Airy Neighbors by the Office of Housing and Community Development, John Andrew Gallery Director (April 1979) by Johnson/Smith Architects with John Collins Landscape Architect.

Chapter Five

Toward a Shared History:

The Reformation of the Germantown Historical Community, 1980-2000

When a German newsmagazine covered the 1983 ceremonies to mark Germantown's 300th anniversary, the reporter was aghast at the sorry state of the neighborhood. The article even went so far as to wonder whether Germantown was in fact "the historic dregs of the city of brotherly love." In spite of such criticism, the Germantown historical community felt it was a successful tercentenary, culminating a period of great energy and productivity in the work of neighborhood history. How could there be such different responses? This chapter argues that both sides were right. The focus here is the collision between the considerable intellectual and professional progress which had been made in the field of history in Germantown and the harsh reality of poverty, derelict buildings, and crime which the neighborhood had become.

In many ways, the tremendous contradictions and ironies that had been at work in Germantown throughout the twentieth century became most evident at the end of it. The 1980s and 1990s saw Germantown as a place with two apparent opposites in working in relation to one another—one of the most historic and beautifully preserved sections of any American city that was also one its poorest and most violent. So prominent had

Germantown's plight become that, when a 1997 event called the "Presidential Summit on Volunteerism" saw President Bill Clinton and Vice-President Al Gore make a national call to combat poverty by volunteering, they did so on Germantown Avenue. And yet by 1997 there were thirteen museums open to the public, regional and national preservation organizations at work in Germantown, and a collaborative umbrella group Historic Germantown Preserved working to support the efforts of the preservation and public history community. Among the contradictions was the fact that while the president called attention to volunteerism, the results of professional expertise at work on history in Germantown were beginning to have great impact.

Professional curators and administrators had begun to work in Germantown's historic house museums in the 1970s, picking up as founding families and descendent groups moved out or passed on the stewardship of the sites. By the 1980s and 1990s, the training and expertise of historians and curators, along with many new tools and initiatives in historiography, stimulated the work of public history and historic preservation in Germantown.

The memory infrastructure began to expand beyond the colonial and revolutionary heritage, as nineteenth century topics like resistance to slavery were addressed. For example, the Johnson House, a 1768 house formerly interpreted for its role in the American Revolution, was discovered in the 1980s to be a site related to the

Underground Railroad. Places and stories that had earlier only existed on the margins of Germantown's historic narratives, such as RittenhouseTown's connections to industrial history and the social history of the Germantown's African American community, began to appear more visibly and more often. Many elements of what became known as the New Social History proved vital to Germantown history in 1980s and 1990s, and resulted in the memory infrastructure expanding. Markers and museums were established to show a greater depth and breadth of history to the community.

Meanwhile historic house museums were moving from one model, of curatorial conservation, to another, one which emphasized urbanism. The National Trust's *Main Street* program for community revitalization in the early 1980s began to encourage communities to examine design and historic fabric in local plans for economic reorganization, so that historic features could serve business attraction and development rather than be wiped out by them. Many sections of Germantown applied for and received historic district status as a result of this new kind of organizational approach. Outreach education programs serving thousands of school children promoted history to neighborhood students and expanded the understanding of how historic houses served the community, with greater emphasis on using museum collections and history for hands-on learning, and showing that collections were not the sole preserve of a few.¹ Ironically, these efforts showed progress in the realm of preservation, making history have positive

effects on the neighborhood overall, during the 1980s and 1990s, at the same time that many Germantown landmarks were failing, institutions closing, and businesses leaving.

If someone familiar to Germantown in the 1970s returned in 2000, he or she would see a lot that had changed for the negative—the Germantown Avenue trolley no longer ran, the farmers market, Ashers Candies and Kirk and Nice Funeral Company, among other prominent business had all left, and the Germantown YWCA and Town Hall, like other buildings on the Avenue, were shuttered. It was as if any of the progress that had been made by professionals and preservationists in the history field, or the work of black community organizers to establish greater equality, remained largely invisible. Meanwhile, professionals working in the historical community began to promote the shared history of the neighborhood, but it would take a while for their work to include neighbors, rather than exclude them.

Bringing the History of the Everyday into Germantown

Changes in how history was practiced in universities and in cities began to have great impact in Germantown in the 1980s and 1990s. The effects of community revitalization through historic districts coincided with expanding the notion of what was considered “historic.” The efforts began to have an impact on the institutional, systemic, and cultural factors that contributed to the Germantown Problem. It took considerable

work to overcome the lack of coordination of so many institutions by building a consortium of history museums. Germantown institutions themselves, some of which, like the YWCA, failed during the 1980s and 1990s, attempted to overcome the stubborn sense of independence with new partners and coalitions. And the melancholic sense of nostalgia continued to infuse Germantown with a sense that it needed a savior and that its best days were long ago.

In each case, though, work in preservation and public history so infused the neighborhood with meaning that greater impact and success could be seen. The fact that new life could be breathed into places like Johnson House sparked a sense that history could be rewritten, not merely mourned. The work of history in Germantown had theoretical underpinnings and backing from sources both in and out of the neighborhood that lent support to history professionals as they wrestled with the divides inherent in preservation in a struggling community.

Preservation in American cities after World War II, generally speaking, worked reactively against developers or federal programs that redrew cities or installed highways. Only in the late 1960s and 1970s did preservation take an active role. The Robert Moses model of city planning in New York began to be resisted with tools like neighborhood historic districts and historical commission designations, as were seen in Germantown beginning in the early 1960s. Ironically, as Michael Wallace has described, the

automobile had actually reinvigorated history tourism and threatened preservation, making it easier for visitors to go to Mt. Vernon or Colonial Williamsburg and “proving that preservation became more profitable.”² The Magaziner Plan in the 1960s was Germantown’s attempt to accommodate the automobile in a vision crafted by urban planning professionals for Germantown Avenue, a vision that tried to remake Germantown as a regional shopping center and was rejected by 1972. The development of suburbs tended to stimulate the construction of interstate highways through inner cities. The destruction of neighborhoods in the way often prompted coalitions of preservationists and political leaders of poor residents to advocate using existing buildings rather than destroying them, using designations to their advantage to bring greater coherence to neighborhoods.

The effort to do so promoted gentrification. When it occurred without community support, this meant investing in adapting historic structures and reusing existing buildings but in ways that pushed out the residents living there if they did not go along.³ Creative use of preservation tax credits allowed new residents to take advantage of older neighborhoods, pushing up home values and the tax base, which was the planned effect. Such activities, however, often drove out existing poor residents and gentrified historic neighborhoods, to a degree that lower income residents began to resist in the 1970s. Protecting a black area by making it a historic district might destroy it (like Jackson Ward

in Richmond, a black area which saw gentrification in the 1970s).⁴ The solution for many was greater involvement of African Americans (who tended to be the residents in lower-income areas) earlier in the process.

This was a lesson not learned in Germantown, as was seen in the Magaziner Plan in the 1960s. By the late 1970s, however, African American representatives for Germantown, like David Richardson, guided the black community into a position to control decisions when developers presented attractive plans for Germantown Avenue. Often, because of the lack of input and approval by African American leadership, opportunities for investment in Germantown were lost. How to bridge divergent sectors when such opportunities arose continued to bedevil Germantown.

Neighborhood conservationists were a complex lot. At times they were populists beating back developers. Michael Wallace described the complexity in terms that could sum up some of Germantown's earlier efforts:

They had commitment to traditional approaches to history. They contested homogenization and stood for particularity, originality, and irreplaceability against uniformity of corporate architecture which blotted out neighborhood distinctiveness. They often supported micro-history movements and underwrote local museums, oral history programs, grassroots bicentennial and ethnic revivals. On the other hand, many neighborhood conservationist groups were fearful, defensive, parochial and racist.⁵

Many such history-minded people sought to keep traditional values intact, such as those of the founders or descendants of original residents, forming a second group. A third

group were chiefly blacks who set out to preserve their neighborhoods *from* historic preservationists and attain a level of empowerment over the sense of place that had been long denied.⁶

This chapter saw a new model of urbanism develop to figure out ways that preservation could be an effective part of economic strategies. Germantown had of course begun trying to use history for economic development since the 1920s, so it was early in trying to blend historic features with commercial development. The long-standing inflexible memory infrastructure, however, together with the conflicts of the past, some of them openly racist, left a patchwork of groups caring for their own piece of the neighborhood's history. Attempts to change that began in earnest in the 1980, with the formation of a consortium of professionals at Germantown's house museums to make the history community address the needs of the immediate neighborhood in terms of its everyday needs.⁷

An example that saw efforts to address how to combine preservation with inner-city communities was Pittsburgh. In 1964 architect Arthur Ziegler said that Pittsburgh preservation was devastating the poor. He founded Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation to involve African Americans in the restoration activity in Pittsburgh neighborhoods. It depended on Mellon Foundation money, from the Pittsburgh banking family, and worked in areas where liberal gentry wanted to retain a multiracial character.

Pittsburgh's economic development of historically black neighborhoods became a national model, particularly with the success of the Manchester neighborhood. Without that private support it likely would not have worked in Pittsburgh.

One of the changes in approach came from the new initiatives for the cities, enacted in late 1970s—first under Ford Administration, but then refined under Carter in 1978. Administered by the Office of Housing and Urban Development, Community Development Block Grants in 1978 split the grants into two, one dealing with poverty, the other with housing stock. The components of these federal approaches through the cities became evident in Germantown in 1979. This meant that momentum for federal funding in Germantown picked up where the opposition to the bypass had left off, but this time with putting forward positive plans, rather than organizing for opposition.

For Germantown this led to greater local control in keeping with its sense of independence from Philadelphia. Programs overseen by Germantown Settlement made it a community development corporation in charge of poverty programs, youth programs and community investment strategies beginning in 1976. The Settlement led a re-organization of the community council as the Central Germantown Council later in the decade. The role of council had declined due to difficulties over the bypass and had effectively passed away by 1980. In its place, the Neighborhood Interfaith Movement pressed for some kind of community forum for leaders of several agencies to coordinate

their efforts. It was an age-old complaint in Germantown that there were too many organizations and too little coordination, much less leadership. Even this prospect of improvement, however, would prove to be susceptible to the Germantown Problem. Ultimately there would be nine community development corporations in Germantown; during the late 1980s and 1990s they would appear at the slightest sign of conflict over a development project, confusing the issue of improvement with power and muddling how preservation might work together with development.⁸

The effort to coordinate development in older cities coincided with an evolution of the historical profession as a whole, as reflected in the historiography, which produced a larger canvas from which to understand American history in general. Preservation activities began to change a sense of what was “historic” began to expand, due to more social history at the university level and its gradual impact on public history. It became known as “New Social History” and used statistical and demographic analysis to tell history from the bottom, rather than history from the perspective of elites, males, and only through military or political history. The movement was informed in part by structuralism and Marxist historians who attempted to explain power structures by examining what got left out; in part by intellectual honesty in examining how traditional historic narratives did not address topics like disease, diet, or poverty; and in part by

techniques that examined sources not typically examined, like shipping lists, obscure memoirs and diaries from those on the margins of power and prestige.

American historians like Gary Nash examined the largely under-told history of Philadelphia's free black community, the largest in the United States before the Civil War.⁹ Even colonial histories examined history from a different non-elite perspective, particularly regarding lower class Philadelphians.¹⁰ Likewise, greater detail to Philadelphia's immigrant history became prominent.¹¹ The Philadelphia Social History Project, begun in the 1970s at the University of Pennsylvania, applied social science techniques to examine particular aspects of human behavior and interrelationships over time. Its director, history and public policy professor Theodore Hershberg, attempted to expand what was commonly thought of regarding Philadelphia history.¹² In addition to his scholarship, he taught the first-ever African American history class offered at an Ivy League university.¹³ While critics felt it over-emphasized computation and never produced a full synthesis for urban history, it remained extremely influential for Philadelphia history, for it produced numerous dissertations and a wider reach for research into history.¹⁴ Whatever the verdict for academic history, the project ultimately provided historic sites with greater amounts of evidence and new perspectives to provide the basis for telling a fuller version of history than they had before. This amounted to

continuity in telling history's content and had the potential for wider audiences to see history as relevant to their own lives.

There was also room for using new social history to explore the context of places. For historic sites, this meant that, if there were new stories to tell, buildings could be looked at differently. Living history sites like Howell Farm in New Jersey or Conner Prairie in Indiana brought to life working on a farm. It was not dressed up reenactors reliving the role of ancestors, but rather interpreters showing the working class life of a farm. Similarly, beginning in 1988 the Lower Eastside Tenement Museum brought to life stories of immigrants to New York City who passed through the tenement. This was preservation with an eye toward explaining the kind of story that the original leaders of the preservation movement had tried to avoid—that of the newcomer to America. Mostly in the past the continuity was an attempt to celebrate connections to patriotic events.¹⁵ Certainly that had been the case throughout the twentieth century in Germantown. In the 1960s and 1970s, however, social historians began to argue that history as presented had served elite narratives and used collections only for conservative approaches, neglected the great majority of the rest of the story, or the connections of the rest of the population to an understanding of the past.¹⁶

The downside of the inclusion of more stories was that it gave license to open more house museums to tell more specific stories. On the one hand, places like Cliveden

would begin to interpret the entire history of the Chew family, including the stories of Chew's enslaved Africans.¹⁷ On the other hand, the 1980s and 1990s saw even more house museums opened to tell stories that its founders had left untold.

The continuing challenge to craft a shared history confronted Germantown in a new way. Rather than too many descendent based groups preserving stories to celebrate their past, the authentic built environment of Germantown allowed it to provide stories of all sorts of different groups from very early in their respective histories. What Delores Hayden called "power of place to nurture citizen's public memory, to encompass shared time in the form of shared territory" was problematic for Germantown, because so little territory had been shared and so much of the preservation work of the twentieth century had separated the nourishing social networks.¹⁸ How would drawing more attention to different histories actually present what the community needed, a less contested historic territory? The paradox meant that elements of the Germantown Problem, too many institutions, a sense of separation from regional efforts, and the melancholy of longing for the good old days, would pose new challenges for the promising group of Germantown's history professionals.

For Germantown, scholarship of demographic and social history came to inform the historic sites with one of the researchers who came out of Penn's social history project, graduate student Robert Ulle. His research into the history of African American

churches focused on Germantown's black community. Finding little research on it, he pursued it in greater detail. And his research produced lasting results that informed the work of the Germantown Mennonite Historic Trust and its work to save both Historic RittenhouseTown and the Johnson House in the 1980s. Stephanie G. Wolf's analysis of the Germantown family provided an in-depth study quite unlike any history of Germantown before.¹⁹ Even though the book, which was based on her doctoral dissertation, was primarily about the colonial period, it was neither solely about the houses, nor the battle, but about family and social-economic life in the village of Germantown, with an illustration of the varieties of life brought to Germantown by various ethnic groups.

For Wolf, Germantown was a transitional neighborhood where people came, established themselves, and left, only to have another group come to Germantown and make a go of life in the colony. Wolf's work adopted a conceptual framework of other social disciplines using social scientific questions, such as those explored by anthropologists, demographic analysts, and sociologists, to look at historical relationships.²⁰ And although historian Ellen Fitzpatrick examined how the 1960s and 1970s did not invent social history, demonstrating that historians had been writing from a wider perspective in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the efforts in the 1970s and 1980s found more fertile ground in the public imagination.²¹ It is telling that the

1982 history of Philadelphia produced by the Library Company of Philadelphia used Germantown historians Tinkcom and Wolf to write two of the three chapters on twentieth century postwar Philadelphia history.

These two scholars of Germantown, widely known for their research into colonial history, had helped to establish continuity between Germantown and the rest of the region's history in their own work. By the early 1980s, both Tinkcom and Wolf served as chairs of boards of historical institutions, with Tinkcom at Wyck and Wolf as president of the Germantown Historical Society. They continued the work that broadened the historic content of the community's history. They also each worked at the institutions they headed to establish ways to hire more professional curatorial staff.²² Even the *Germantown Crier* was publishing greater numbers of works by professional scholars, with established historians like Margaret Hope Bacon examining the history of religion in Germantown and David Contosta providing histories of German Township. In this setting the 1980s and 1990s saw the history of the everyday making a case for the Germantown historical community expanding its thin base of support within the neighborhood.

These efforts amounted to a break with the way that history had been preserved in the past. The paradox of more history effectively presented and preserved could potentially make for a more divided community. The amount of work to do was

daunting, as members of the history community came to realize that history needed to offer more to the neighborhood. One officer of the Germantown Historical Society considered this in 1985. “The melancholy condition of much of Germantown is diverse and complex. Unless we work to improve our community we cannot in the long run even preserve our monuments. They would become like provincial tombs of some long-forgotten local families, and their importance would be lost.”²³ With greater professional support in the historical organizations, however, outreach programs to schools and the community began to be heavily emphasized, a trend evident in other museums throughout the region.²⁴ As these efforts gradually took effect, one result was a larger basis for collaboration among professional conservators and preservationists, within Germantown. Another took the form of bringing in preservation professionals from outside the region who were enlisted in education and preservation programs for the Germantown community. These steps resulted in preservation efforts taking a concerted approach in keeping with the broader profession. And one of the chief results was to make more prominent the stories of African Americans, workers, and immigrant groups. When this occurred, places like the Johnson House, Maxwell Mansion, and Historic RittenhouseTown, and groups like the Germantown Mennonite Historic Trust became active in reshaping the Germantown historical narrative to include different voices and places. It amounted to a reformation of the Germantown historical community.

The Founding of Historic Germantown Preserved: Collaboration for Continuity

The recast historical community in Germantown had its roots in 1979, with the creation of an umbrella organization, “The Association of Historic Germantown Houses”, as a way for each historic house’s volunteers and staff (for those that had staff) to meet and discuss issues and plan common programs and strategies. It had grown out of what were successful events and programs for the Bicentennial and annual holiday tours. It represented a more recent attempt at coordinated planning, something that had been the role of groups like the Germantown and Chestnut Hill Improvement Society and the Germantown Community Council. The difference in 1979 was that there were more trained professionals involved in the historic sites, though still not many. Since 1972, when Raymond G. Shepard began as the full-time executive director of Cliveden, there were full-time professional employees at three of the sites, including a professional curator at Wyck since 1978, and a full-time paid director of the Germantown Historical Society. Most of the places used volunteer guides, often descendants of the families, but the efforts to coordinate the houses beyond larger tourist initiatives had begun to grow.

Professionalism did not come easy to the sites, as many of them were still in their infancy as organizations with little funding to hire staff. It was hard enough to provide funds to maintain a house, collections, and grounds, let alone funds to hire an expert to

manage these efforts. The late 1970s and 1980s, however, saw a period where individuals, trained at least in some aspects of conservation and preservation but primarily curating, began to bring expertise to Germantown that moved interpretation and preservation beyond primary focus on its connections to actual family members and beyond significance as defined by the colonial or federal periods. Where professional support had been involved in history in Germantown in the post-World War II period had largely been in preservation and planning. Colonial Germantown, Inc. had a professionally trained director, one who came from a planning background. And even the founding of Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion involved from the earliest days the preservation architect and planner, Henry J. Magaziner (a long-time member of the Philadelphia Historical Commission), in a volunteer role. Indeed most of the people who were working on historic issues in Germantown were involved in planning and architecture.

Beginning in the late 1970s, however, the boundaries began to dissolve between house museum conservation and urban planning in Germantown. One example was a 1979 plan for Germantown Avenue, done in conjunction with the East and West Mt. Airy Neighbors, the Germantown Avenue Merchants, Association, and the Office of Housing and Community Development, along with Cliveden, a site of National Trust for Historic Preservation.²⁵ It indicates some of the ways in which the thinking had advanced from

the plans of the previous decades. In many ways it combined the hope for commercial district improvements as well as prescriptions for preservation of various kinds of buildings. A key difference, though, was that it slightly deemphasized the tourism model that had characterized earlier plans; it also had a specific series of recommendations for community implementation of the plan, thereby avoiding some of the vitriol which had characterized the unpopular and unsuccessful “bypass plan” of the 1960s.

The noticeable differences with that effort were, first, an attempt to integrate the various interests into the plan, including cultural institutions, community groups, and commercial interests. Second, the implementation agenda included a three-year series of objectives for each of the interest groups. Finally, many of the tasks of implementation at the community level were assigned to three different sets of tools, each categorizing long-time thinking slightly differently, taking familiar players and rearranging them slightly. For instance, there was to be first, an “umbrella development organization” to assure progress toward goals. Second, it called for a relatively new level of agency, the local development corporation (what came to be called the “community development corporation”) with lead power to take specific tasks for a defined geographic area, using privately raised funds to leverage public funding for specific purposes like parking. The third and final “tool” was to be the economic benefit of historic preservation. Granted,

this role of historic preservation had long been touted, but there was little in the way of economic incentive for it until the 1966 Historic Preservation Act.

Here was a combination of civic groups, a government agency, and historic sites, working together with the help of a professional architectural firm. Such restructuring of development and commercial investment rearranged the issues and strategies to meet mutual objectives even included what was taking place in Germantown and Mt. Airy, often involving the very staffs and volunteers involved in the historic sites themselves. Its combined goals of “historic enhancement” including business promotions, landscape improvements, and engagement of community organizations combined various approaches of several different sectors. Like the Magaziner Plan described in the previous chapter, though, the 1979 plan foundered because of the inability to bring black political leadership along with the plan early enough in the process.

Another case of boundaries dissolving was the successful 1982 addendum to the National Register Nomination, which was an example of the effect of the reformation of the historical community as well as the establishment of greater connection between the past and what Germantown looked like to residents.²⁶ The nomination sought to add numerous examples of nineteenth and early twentieth century architecture to the designation of Germantown Avenue as historic and deserving of preservation protection. Already in 1966, a 2-mile stretch of Germantown Avenue had been designated by the

National Park Service as the “Colonial Germantown Historic District from Windrim Avenue to Sharpnack Street.” This designation brought the commercial corridor of the Avenue specific protection from unsympathetic alteration or demolition.

The designation also made available tax credits for property owners doing building work on the structures. In light of the numerous examples of demolition of older buildings, including examples from the 1980s such as the Thones Kunders building (where the 1688 Protest Against Slavery had been drafted), this designation brought some necessary protections to the historic fabric and distinctive architectural aesthetic of Germantown. The 1966 designation, however, in keeping with the predominant understanding of Germantown’s significance, stressed the colonial and federal periods of the eighteenth century. The 1982 designation represented an example in how the developing professional ethic in Germantown gradually began to emphasize and draw from a broader source of historical significance than the 1700s alone.

The 1982 designation actually brought the case for Germantown’s architectural significance into the twentieth century by including banking buildings and department stores of the shopping district at Cheltenham Avenue and Germantown. “Germantown’s commercial district was so large and so complete that for more than fifty years it was called a ‘city’ within a city,” and its development, which included the changes in transportation modes brought to the Avenue, the railroad, electrified trolley, and

automobile. In the words of the nomination inventory, “it was the largest commercial district outside downtown Philadelphia.”²⁷ The nomination, prepared by the first director of the Historical Society, in collaboration with a professional architectural preservation firm, the Clio Group, succeeded in extending the longest historic district in the country from a purely colonial district to a historic district spanning nearly three centuries. The curatorial and urbanist strands of preservation were brought together in Germantown in increasing ways. An example from 1980 showed how historic preservation in Germantown almost certainly led one to encounter community development corporations.

The Association of Historic Germantown Houses in the early 1980s began to coordinate research and planning among the sites. In what they considered an example of “programs of educational outreach”, they produced a 1980 professional development symposium, *Spaces and Places in Germantown: Contemporary Life in an Historic Environment*.²⁸ The program, organized by two house museums, Maxwell Mansion and Wyck, meant that educational outreach expanded to include skills and perspectives from other places, not simply reenactment and living history. The 1980 program laid out community-wide strategies for preservation—with several case studies from other cities. The intended audience was for like-minded individuals, namely volunteers at the sites, community members interested in the maintenance of the neighborhood’s historic aesthetic, and professionals who might be able to lend expertise or at the very least

perspective to the efforts. The case studies emphasized the best practices in the field. The director of Cliveden, Raymond Shepherd, presented strategies for neighborhood revitalization, using examples from Cliveden and other National Trust historic sites. Longtime preservation organizer, Arthur Ziegler, of the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation emphasized the popular uses of historic preservation.

While government programs to stimulate preservation-based development were highlighted in a section describing “adaptive re-use” of historic structures for public and private use. Former Philadelphia city planner Edmund Bacon, Henry Magaziner, and New York City’s Dr. Floyd Lapp were featured speakers, who related the evolution of historic preservation and the nuanced distinctions of restoration, renovation, and reuse that could be successfully deployed in older communities. The planners of the symposium intended for this to be done in advance of another series of “lectures, exhibitions, and special events co-sponsored with members of the Association of historic Germantown Houses during the Tercentenaries of Philadelphia and Germantown in 1982 and 1983 respectively.”

During this time, Philadelphia’s museums and collecting societies were conducting similar seminars, culminating in the seminal book by Edwin Wolf.²⁹ The memory infrastructure was indeed expanding and becoming more connected to the

community's issues. And Germantown was able to draw on some of the key names in the field in order to develop the vocabulary to make it work.

An increased focus on the research—the paint analysis, receipt books, and analysis of memoir accounts for ways of living in the historic houses—resulted, and the attention given to the restoration of historic sites came to provide the critical pieces of documentation to support preservation and restoration decisions. Even though this would mean delving into the minute details of buildings and collections the way that antiquarians had, rooting the efforts in scientific terms pushed such documentation from the celebratory and proprietary aims of descendants to the educational and useful research objectives. Therefore the efforts to explain context and setting were extremely vital to the historical community's efforts in the 1980s, a marked contrast to the inability to place the researched detail into a larger setting in early parts of the century. One example was the ability of citizens to get public designation for their own neighborhoods as “historic districts,” such as the street in Germantown which became the “Tulpehocken Historic District”.³⁰ Using professional architects to marshal the nominating process on behalf of an articulated desire of residents was an effective way of using historic resources collaboratively to protect the district.

The work of collaboration, therefore, expanded from professionals focused on research, preservation, and presentation of Germantown history to applying leading

contemporary practices to the neighborhood. It was an attempt to address the institutional and systemic aspects of the Germantown Problem, by keeping the many historic organizations working toward agreed-upon goals, many of which identified community concerns and made use of regional and even national expertise for guidance.

One of the first big collaborative projects entered into by Historic Germantown Preserved was the planning for the 300th anniversary of the German-American settlement in America that took shape in Germantown in 1683. The people lending talents to it included representatives of the history community of Germantown and the Philadelphia German-American community, not many of whom lived in Germantown. The excitement and energy of the participants of the Germantown historical community was tested, but not by producing the program, which by all accounts went well. The test came with the clash of expectations, when many of the visitors to historic Germantown got to see not the rustic charm of preserved colonial architecture, but an inner city neighborhood marred by neglect.

“The Neglected Historic Dregs of the City of Brotherly Love?”

Members of the history community may have felt a great sense of action going on in the 1970s and early 1980s, but it was not always evident to outsiders. Soon after the bicentennial of America in 1976 and of the Battle of Germantown in 1977, the historic

site community prepared for another week-long series of anniversary celebrations, as they had done in the past, hopeful that this celebration would make people see Germantown for all its significance, appreciating its heritage and unique place (or places) in American history. And like other festival celebrations offered by Germantown throughout the twentieth century, 1983 provided a sort of text to understand how history blended in with the civic and community thinking of the time. While the events proved very successful for the planners, the whole episode showed the challenges facing everyone working in Germantown history.

Fifty and seventy-five years earlier, there had been week-long festivals with parades, publications, and events coordinated by descendents, civic and business leaders in attracting attention to Germantown's storied past. 1983 attempted a return to the same "history week" model of programming. The 1983 events culminated on October 6, and celebrated the original 13 families, the 33 Krefelders, who journeyed on the ship *Concord* for 74 days to reach their new settlement in William Penn's colony of Pennsylvania. Press coverage of the jubilee showcased the weeks of events leading up to the big event on October 6, including a visit by a Philadelphia delegation, led by Mayor Bill Green and many Germantowners, to Krefeld and culminating in a parade in Center City Philadelphia featuring United States President Ronald Reagan and West German Federal President Karl Carstens. The presidents delivered a proclamation celebrating the deep bonds

between Germany and the United States as having derived from the events 6 miles away in Germantown beginning in 1683. They did not come to Germantown, as the parade remained in Center City, though West German President Carstens brought his delegation to Germantown and visited the Historical Society and other sites.

From the Germantown side of things, the whole affair was perceived very positively, with attendance, programs and publicity turning out favorable numbers and in some cases record-setting. New and different audiences toured the historic houses, including descendents of Germantown families visiting from all over the world. New exhibitions had been installed for the occasion at the Germantown Historical Society and important artifacts, like the 1743 Sauer Bible (the first Bible printed in America, in Germantown by Christopher Sauer), were showcased for the occasion with great fanfare. A framed proclamation signed by President Carstens marking his visit still hangs prominently in the Historical Society. Overall, the events were extremely important for Germantown history, however, not so much in that it unearthed new information or put the neighborhood in the public eye. The irony that the community would see the event differently from an opinionated spectator indicates how much the history community was focused on the day-to-day work of public history and historic preservation in the neighborhood.

The German press coverage, encapsulated in the lengthy *Zeit Magazin* cover story, took a deep and caustic view of contemporary Germantown.³¹ During a period of great work and progress for Germantown's preservationists, onlookers could only express dismay. As covered in the *Zeit Magazin*, the German media focused only slightly on the ceremonies and the presentations and more on the reality of life in Germantown and the marked absence of Germans there in the last decades of the twentieth century.

The cover image presented a jarring contrast of past and present. An honor guard of five men dressed in colorful Prussian military uniforms (two of whom carried rifles) was shown marching past grey buildings with boarded windows covered in graffiti on the broken cobblestone of Germantown Avenue. Intended to depict the lively connections between Germany and America in 1983, the image represented the state in which the Germantown history community had led itself in the late twentieth century—out of place with the setting, wearing colorful costumes yet aesthetically disconnected from the community, showing outsiders dressing up and bringing their sense of the past to a community where they no longer fit. It also could be argued that it might even have raised the specter of the arch-conservative streak in Germantown's heritage societies, which had resulted in a large membership in the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s and perhaps even the presence of Nazi Germany's ambassador in 1933. The image of costumed

German soldiers marching up the Avenue could not have been more out of touch with where the community was in 1983.

The article showed how the story of Germantown's history-making, from the founding of its house museums and historical societies, when Founders Day parades and reenactments attracted thousands of people to Germantown Avenue in 1908, had followed that path to a dead end. While many descendants of the original Krefelders were found, interviewed, and profiled, the thrust of the story went in an entirely different direction. The article also described the five-man honor guard dressed in reenactment Prussian military uniforms carrying flags parading down Germantown Avenue in front of boarded-up abandoned buildings and decaying storefronts. Known as "Langen Kerls," the honor guard performed in other German-American events in Philadelphia, including the annual Steuben Day parade. "The Steuben Day parade will certainly never be held here," said the flag-bearer.

The German reporters criticized the state of Germantown, and did so in terms that included its historic preservation, without really understanding that Germantown had long ago lost its "Germanness." Words like "decline" were used to describe the neighborhood all through the article, with special attention given to the racial factor and the declining interest in preservation. "The German Township is a Black ghetto. German Americans call the section these days 'the black forest'... Germantown in the Jubilee

Year 1983: I pass through decaying streets, the spray paint soiled facades, and whole city blocks vacant, doors and windows strewn with trash and debris. Is this Philadelphia's future Bronx? The neglected historic dregs of the City of Brotherly Love? What, other than a few relics in the Historical Society (the *Heimat Museum*) and an ad for Schlitz beer, is still German in Germantown?"³² One is reminded of the skeleton pictured in Benton Spruance's 1935 painting, *Visitor to Germantown*; in 1983, it was if "the visitor" returned and had a lot to report.

According to people involved in the Germantown 300th events, the German magazine article incensed the chief organizer of the 300th programs throughout the city, St. Joseph's University German professor George Bichl. Some participants were able to brush off the unflattering coverage as sensationalist magazine reporting.³³ Others indicated that the trolley ride with German visitors up to Germantown provided more than a few of them with shocking glimpse of urban decay. "They thought they were going to be seeing a quaint, German-style village, and instead they saw what it was—it was quite a clash of expectations."³⁴

The lasting impact of the 300th anniversary was the sense by the history community that this kind of festival would be continually hard to duplicate in the future, that the volunteer base was declining, and that something different would have to be done. People involved were very concerned for the future of the preservation movement

in Germantown. The 1983 spectacle was most successful in legitimating the professional group, small but growing in number and influence, which had such a hand in planning and producing the 300th anniversary.

The experience revealed the limits of the older antiquarian approach to history, and the rise of the professional historical community as it was striving to establish a kind of historical continuity to understand Germantown past and present. More people with enough professional background and experience had come to work in Germantown history and to understand that for the community's history to be a sustaining part of the life of the neighborhood—whether it be the built environment, the educational potential, or the important roles it played—then it would have to do more than reawaken once or twice per year and build up momentum to the next big holiday or anniversary. The 1983 celebrations threw the community's approach to history into question and raised the issue of how to make the history of Germantown serve the entire community.

Expanding Beyond the Colonial and Revolutionary

Another anniversary followed five years later. This time the celebration of the 1688 Germantown Protest Against Slavery and the 1988 anniversary programs saw activities not as elaborate in terms of costumes or reenactments. Germantown's past was presented to reflect more the growing relation of the past to the contemporary context and

showcased the skills developed by the social history approaches to history at work in the neighborhood. Its work exhibited the expanded thinking in content, context, and skills in the 1980s to tell better stories with greater relevance to more people in different ways.

The 1988 celebration attempted to bridge some of that exclusive tendency. The celebration tended to the academic, with an exhibition about abolition in Germantown held at the Germantown Historical Society and several issues of the *Crier* devoted to the story of Germantown's fight against slavery. The presentations, articles, and display emphasized the Quakers' fight against slavery more than the experience of enslavement or the extent of it in Germantown.

It is worth examining briefly the course of the 1688 protest in Germantown's public memory. Outreach to the black community was slow in coming, but the 1688 protest was always prominent in Germantown's public memory, though often from a perspective that celebrated whites, not the plight of blacks. The actual history of the 1688 protest was celebrated mostly for the triumph of religious progressivism and of Germantown's self-promotion as place of toleration, or in the case of John Fanning Watson, the early forward thinking of German and Dutch immigrants. The actual document opposed the importation, sale, and the ownership of slaves. A recent study of the protest dealt with the short document in terms of its religious message—that it was an intra-Quaker communiqué about the concern of Quakers in the slave trade.³⁵ The fact

that the protest slowly made its way from monthly to quarterly to yearly meetings (the organizational structure of the region's Society of Friends) kept the document unsung, which was the primary focus of the recent study.

The subject here, though, is its role in public memory, which is to say how the largely white historical community treated what was Germantown's signature achievement in abolitionist circles. The protest made it into some of the antiquarian literature of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, presented as a highlight of Germantown's progressive activism and the wisdom of the Quakers.³⁶ There was actually was a specific moment early in the twentieth century when the house could have been preserved for greater cooperation between whites and blacks and allowed the community to live up to the document's reputation.

The house where it was drafted, the home of Thones Kunders at 5109 Germantown Avenue, was once considered a worthy site to be considered part of the memory infrastructure. Several markers were placed at the site the Site and Relic Society in the early 1900s.³⁷ And Baugh's 1913 commemoration drew attention to it that would continue to give the house prominence, such as with the attempt to preserve the house by the American Negro Historical Society.³⁸

The German Society of Pennsylvania commissioned its own commemorative conference in 1988 to examine relations between African-Americans and German-

Americans, primarily in context in American political history.³⁹ The process at work during the 1980s showed that new social history could bring forth stories in Germantown not regularly told, which at first concerned colonial sites. The period also shows how working with the black community's history ultimately brought forth a new type of historic site in Germantown, one devoted to nineteenth century black history. Each step required new partnerships and skill sets that could not have been possible but for the expansion of the practice of history to explore undertold stories.

It is important now to examine how the Germantown Mennonite Congregation and its archival arm, the Mennonite Historic Trust, led the way to imagine a new kind of historic house preservation. Specifically it concerned how the Mennonites got involved in preserving historic houses in Germantown and how the stories they preserved told new stories of one colonial site, RittenhouseTown, and one Underground Railroad site, the Johnson House.

The Germantown Mennonites proved instrumental in the ability of Germantown to move toward a shared history of the neighborhood. Facing a small congregation in the mid-1970s (when it numbered just a couple of dozen members), the church had roots in the seventeenth century. It was involved in historic preservation because its historic 1770 meeting house was a landmark on Germantown Avenue, located across the street from what had been the Germantown Colored Branch of the YWCA.

The national district office of the Mennonite Congregation was concerned that the original Mennonite congregation of Germantown might be lost. In 1952 it formed a corporation called the Germantown Mennonite Historic Trust. The interest was in preserving the meetinghouse, which had been built in 1770 by local cabinet maker Jacob Knorr who was a converted Mennonite, who was also involved in the construction of Cliveden and several other buildings on Germantown Avenue. The interest grew into caring for and developing the campus of buildings around the meeting house, but then opportunities arose which brought the group into a larger role in Germantown by facilitating preservation efforts at RittenhouseTown and Johnson House.

Finding ways to cope with a dwindling congregation, the Mennonite Church was not unlike other churches in Germantown during the 1970s, particularly ones with white parishioners. The difference was that a bequest had left the Germantown Mennonite Congregation with a substantial endowment estimated at half a million dollars.

Rather quickly, the Mennonite Historic Trust found ways to make use of the endowment to protect its historic meeting house, such as purchasing land surrounding it and the graveyard. It also began to discuss strategies with national Mennonite leaders in New York and the Midwest about ways to make the congregation more viable, discussions which resulted in a strategy to attract peace activists of their faith to urban areas.⁴⁰ One elder in particular, Melvin Gingerich, was a professor of history at the

University of Iowa and a leader of the National Mennonite Archives, and he had spent nine months in Germantown in the early 1970s.⁴¹ He stressed the connections of Mennonites with the history of Germantown, particularly with its meeting house in disrepair. Opportunities came up that brought the group into a wider role in historic Germantown's preservation.

Gingerich was a pivotal figure in combining social justice with traditional approaches to history as well as helping pave the way to new social history in Germantown and for the Mennonites. He paved the way for a new mission for the congregation by convincing Mennonites with business backgrounds to get involved in helping Germantown Mennonite Meeting move ahead with preservation development within a wider context in Germantown.⁴² This became the prime factor in preservation in Germantown in the 1970s and 1980s. Taken together with the efforts of the Germantown Historical Society, with its acquisition fund and the inroads into buying real estate to preserve it, the limited but creative efforts of the Germantown Mennonite Historic Trust acted like a historically-themed community development corporation at a time when such entities were just getting off the ground. It acted not so much as a heritage society or even a congregational steward managing its property, but a business enterprise addressing its threats and opportunities with creative use of assets, including its networks and knowledge, all rooted in history.

Gingerich helped infuse a historic component to the social activism of the work the congregation was doing, both as a knowledge builder and a force for building leadership relationships. Many of the people who worked for the Mennonite Historic Trust used their interest and training in history as a way to build their congregation's size and positive message in the troubled section of Philadelphia that was Germantown. They exemplified new approaches to urban problems.

The work began to draw the Mennonite Historic Trust into deeper relationships with the other Germantown historic sites. Some of this was by virtue of personal connections. The husband and wife who lived as caretakers of nearby Wyck were among the small number of congregants at the Mennonite Meeting. But quickly the interest of the Mennonites in the greater historic context of the congregation came into contact with sites that were struggling. First was the potential loss of RittenhouseTown, the site of America's first paper mill and a bustling nineteenth century village along the creeks on the western end of Germantown. Seven buildings from the village remained since the last mill had been closed in the late nineteenth century and the property became owned by the Fairmount Park Commission. When the remaining buildings came under threat by a proposed demolition, the Mennonite Historic Trust worked with Rittenhouse family descendents and representatives of paper companies located in the Delaware Valley. The paper industry had had a long association with the site.⁴³ RittenhouseTown was

important to the interests of the Mennonite Historic Trust, as Gingerich pointed out, because Wilhelm Rittenhouse was the first Mennonite minister in America. His descendants included colonial-era mathematician, inventor, and statesman, David Rittenhouse.

The ability to build a coalition to save the site allowed the Mennonite Historic Trust to fill its mission in the preservation of the Mennonite heritage in North America, for which RittenhouseTown was highly important. It also occurred at a time when industrial history and the history of historic farming was becoming a viable way for new social history to be factored into public history. Living history farms and industrial heritage areas were established, such as Lowell, Massachusetts, where community and university people produced a museum in a still working textile mill—that examined the history of the town from a perspective sensitive to the working class history and diverse ethnic cultures.⁴⁴ In 1984, thirty individuals came to aid the Mennonite Trust to form Historic RittenhouseTown, Inc. to preserve, restore, and historically interpret Historic RittenhouseTown. This group of individuals, a combination of descendants, paper industry historians, preservationists, and Mennonites worked to prevent further deterioration of the buildings and to open the buildings to the public to share the history of the site's importance to religious and industrial history. In 1990 the site opened for visitors and the hands-on papermaking program for students.

The organization conducted a major capital campaign to celebrate the tercentenary of the founding of the paper mill in 1990, raising enough money to hire a professional staff, convert the 1740 Abraham Rittenhouse Home into a visitor center and the barn into a papermaking studio. In 1995 it became a National Historic Landmark for its significance in America's industrial history. That the site had colonial and revolutionary connections was secondary to its religious and manufacturing heritage, establishing a multi-building example of the historical continuity in Germantown. Its establishment exemplified what historian Michael Wallace called, "Instances of fruitful collaboration between community groups and younger historians whose work reflected a critical approach to the past."⁴⁵

Expanding the Memory Infrastructure to African American History

Meanwhile, as the Mennonite Historic Trust was involved in one site, members of other Germantown community groups were making inroads to examine more fully the history of Germantown in the twentieth century, particularly its African American history. A local community leader, Louise Strawbridge, herself the descendent of an established Philadelphia family, worked for the senior citizen center, Center in the Park in the 1980s. Center in the Park was an organization founded in 1968 which moved to the site of the old Carnegie Library in Vernon Park in 1986. Strawbridge was a local

artist who worked as a coordinator of the center's activities. Much of her work built on oral histories of the senior citizens who came to the center. She proved to be a regular visitor to the Germantown Historical Society to help put the stories she was hearing into context. Because of the number of African Americans taking part in the program, and because of her unfamiliarity, she scoured the archives of the Historical Society to find more African American source material, of which there was not much. One of her finds was the *1913 Commemorative Souvenir* of Germantown's black community, a photographic essay by local printer J. Gordon Baugh, Jr. in the year of the 50th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. The limited captions in the booklet led her to seek assistance from the seniors at the Center in the Park. Strawbridge published an annotated version of the Baugh's commemorative booklet in 1983 and 1984 issues of the *Germantown Crier*, identifying the names of businesses in the black community or the owners of the houses located in the limited captions of Baugh, which included listings like "place where our people bought butter and eggs."⁴⁶ It was significant to re-discover a fascinating snapshot of a world long gone, but it also represented some of the earliest public work of the Society toward the African American history of the community. Strawbridge's work did not stop there.

Annotating the 1913 booklet to help make it clear to contemporary Germantowners led Strawbridge to seek more oral histories from the senior citizens at the

Center of the Park. The project included a series of programs that began to record the African American community's experience of Germantown in the twentieth century.⁴⁷ The findings included details of social segregation, such as reflections by graduates of the neighborhood's many schools and the many youth clubs in the early twentieth century. They also included descriptions of residential segregation, but told from the subjective standpoint of a white listener learning from the process. Strawbridge recounted, "I was not prepared to hear about growing up in such a segregated—and prejudiced—world."⁴⁸ Soon stories about the all-black Hill School or the "Colored School" became more fully described, as did the early years of the Wissahickon Boys Club and the vibrancy of the Black Branches of the YWCA. Publishing her work in the *Crier*, as well as in local newspapers, and promoting the oral histories among the seniors, Strawbridge's projects established a documentary record of the African American community.

The work served a number of ways that shaped the memory infrastructure. First of all, a marker was installed on a site where the Joseph Hill School had been in a ceremony bringing together its graduates in 1987.⁴⁹ It was one of the first markers to deal with an exclusively African American site, and it is important to note that it is a local touchstone of working-class everyday life now gone, not a monument to a signature event or nationally prominent figure. An even more ambitious project involved a mural in the Philadelphia Courthouse, illustrating and often quoting specific episodes by seniors at the

Center in the Park—about episodes covering eighty years of history all over the city, such as work at the Navy Yard or experiences during with civil rights protests in the 1950s and 1960s. It also illustrated some of the isolated neighborhoods in the Germantown section where blacks had lived, using a kind of subjective mapping worked into the artwork.⁵⁰ With the details and the stories more fully described, the oral histories became more visible and tangible, meaning that Germantown’s African American community was extending into the memory infrastructure elements of its own sense of place.

This level of activity in the 1980s served the Germantown historical community well, which made the establishment of a historic house museum related to Germantown’s abolition history a logical step in the evolution of Germantown’s public memory.

Establishing the Old Johnson House as a New Historic Site

There is perhaps no chapter in the history of preservation of Germantown that exemplifies the evolution of the field more than that of the Johnson House Historic Site. The profile of the Underground Railroad in the public memory of Germantown was far lower than that of the 1688 Protest.⁵¹ Establishing the Johnson House as an Underground Railroad station was a culmination of all the threads presented in this chapter, as well as the many explored throughout this entire study. While it would become a symbol of

expanding the historical memory, however, it would also embody key features of Germantown's challenge to have shared history amid its long legacy of division.

The Johnson House brought together the social activism of the Mennonites, the vibrancy of Germantown's black community, and the evolving historic house field into one effort to preserve the 1768 Dutch-built house on the corner of Germantown Avenue and Washington Lane.

Like many Underground Railroad stations, Johnson House has a story that is an intriguing blend of fact and tradition. How the case was made for Johnson House being established as an Underground Railroad landmark is likewise a blend of analysis and embellishment, some of it elucidating the contradictions that are so revealing for Germantown history. The subject of the Underground Railroad, while it was mentioned in some scattered sources in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth, was not commonly considered, much less promoted.⁵² Charles Blockson and Robert Ulle, coming from different perspectives and working independently, spearheaded the drive to research the house, secure funding, and establish limited tours of the house. The detective work became a study in the continual progress of the historical profession and the expansion of the public memory infrastructure in Germantown.

What little there was written about the Underground Railroad in Germantown was discovered in the 1970s and 1980s and largely re-written. Even Baugh's 1913 booklet

employed the Watson view that slavery in Germantown was not widespread—there was no mention of Underground Railroad activity at all. To explain how Germantown discovered the Underground Railroad requires looking at an unlikely nineteenth century source, an obscure novel from 1890, *The Riversons: A Tale of the Wissahickon*.⁵³

The book's author, S.J. Bumstead, was from New England who studied to become a doctor in Philadelphia. He had some correspondence with Hiram Corson, a member of a leading abolitionist family from Plymouth Meeting and Norristown.⁵⁴ What an aspiring physician was doing writing fanciful novels is unclear. And the connections of the author to the actual events may or may not be accurate or provable, even as it connected some of the dots about families with anti-slavery activity. As astounding as it might seem, the novel became *the* primary source in bringing to Germantown's public memory a larger role for the Underground Railroad. Whether the novel rendered an accurate portrayal, or merely suggested fictional ideas that were picked up later, is worth considering here.

The novel tells the story of the Riversons, a Germantown family that operated a mill along the Wissahickon that had run into tough times in the mid-nineteenth century. Old Colonel Riverson had died and left his family's mill holdings in a perilous state, so much so that that the children are forced to work in the mills of nearby Manayunk to fend off creditors. Though fictional, it is hard not to read into the characters several composites, since many references, such as to Germantown's Mennonite churches and

Quaker schools, were explicit. For instance the bank, Trexel, Lorgan and Co. thus became a soft version of Drexel, Morgan & Co. a major bank in Philadelphia and New York. The Riversons themselves seem to be a composite of industrial families of the Wissahickon, like the Rittenhouses, and the anti-slavery families of Germantown and Norristown, like the Johnsons or the Corsons.

The plot involves young Marian Riverson, a woman who keeps sleepwalking at night through the Wissahickon Valley, causing public alarm. Often she comes back with gold coins in her hand, bringing even greater public outcry, particularly as her family tries to hold off the creditors—is she robbing people or perhaps selling herself to help the family? Helping to keep track of her and tracing her path is a friend, Dr. Sydney Ransom, who finds out that her sleepwalking brings her to the caves along the Wissahickon’s hillside. Interacting with the caves brings Ransom into contact with people helping freedom seekers on the Underground Railroad—who use a Dearborn wagon to take escaping slaves to hide in the caves on their way to abolitionist sympathizers in Germantown. The path of this escape brings people from the west in Norristown, across the Flat Rock Dam on the Schulykill River, through the Wissahickon Valley, crossing at Crease Lane, coming down Township Line Road (now Wissahickon Avenue) to a signal where they can hide in caves in Wissahickon. By interacting with the Underground Railroad episodes, Ransom has greater familiarity with the caves and he

figures out that the girl Marian is sleepwalking each night to a cave where the old Colonel had hidden his gold treasure. The family discovers the truth and the gold, pays off the creditors, and Marian's reputation is restored, so she and Dr. Ransom are wed. The Underground Railroad material is flavored throughout the novel, but amounts to a small portion of it.

The novel was mentioned briefly but importantly in a paragraph in a 1926 edition of the old Germantown *Beehive*. This source, entitled, "Lost Cave in the Wissahickon," described a local man, William Shingle, who talked of caves in the Wissahickon, including one where a dog had been lost. He then related how Germantown tradition holds that "such a cavern existed and was used in the Civil War times as a hiding place for runaway slaves who came in on the underground railway." The correspondent mentioned in *The Beehive* article then lists the path taken by fugitives, which just so happens is the exact path as described in the *Riversons*. The *Beehive* article concludes that "there is in existence a little known novel, *The Riversons*, says Mr. Shingle, written by Umstead, who lived in RittenhouseTown. It was written before the Civil War but attracted little attention."⁵⁵

The reason these antiquarian reminiscences matter is that they were referenced by Charles Blockson as the primary evidence that the route to freedom from the south ran through Philadelphia, then Germantown and then up to New Hope, New Jersey and on to

New York and Canada. Blockson was a teacher in the Norristown school district. He began to research African-American genealogy upon learning of his own ancestor's involvement in the Underground Railroad by reading William Still's *The Underground Railroad in Pennsylvania*. Blockson used the 1926 *The Beehive* account as his source of the pathway through Philadelphia and environs for Underground Railroad activity.⁵⁶

Meanwhile, beginning in the late 1970s, members of the Mennonite congregation who were interested in the history of Germantown continued to make important discoveries in their continuing efforts to bring greater interest to Germantown. Until 1980 the Johnson House was run by the Women's Club of Germantown and used for card parties and dances (actress, and later princess, Grace Kelly had her birthday party there). After 1980, the house was in danger of being lost. It stepped the Germantown Mennonite Historic Trust who bought it for a dollar in 1980. Melvin Gingerich had emphasized that its builder was an early Mennonite minister and the Dutch-German architecture was important to Mennonite history nationally. Caretakers from the local historical community, including the curator of Wyck and the executive director of the Mennonite Historic Trust, actually lived in the Johnson House at various times to help keep it safe. Mennonite doctoral student Robert Ulle continued his social history research into the continuity of the black community in Germantown churches set the

stage for the deeper context of understanding some of the oldest houses still standing in Germantown, the Johnson House.

To tell how a house could turn from being a site of one period to that of another is a stellar case of the continual reinterpretation of history and reexamining of what matters in its context in order to understand historical continuity. A 1768 Dutch Colonial farmhouse built by Jacob Knorr, the same person who built Cliveden, Germantown Mennonite Meeting and other sites, Johnson House was involved in the Battle of Germantown and for many years included in all the Germantown historic tours of the twentieth century because of its association with the battle. Like other sites in Germantown, an effort to save the site had to be mobilized to preserve the site when it was in danger of being sold and torn down in 1980. By 1997, however, it had been declared a National Historic Landmark, not for its revolutionary history, but as a station on the Underground Railroad.

Because it is such a recent historic site, there is actually very little published about the Johnson House. It is necessary therefore to summarize the story and then tease out the trail of evidence that built the case. Jennett and Samuel Johnson had 10 children and each one was a member of important anti-slavery organizations in the Philadelphia region.⁵⁷

Rowland Johnson was perhaps the best known of the family's anti-slavery proponents, a leader in the Longwood Yearly Meeting of Progressive Friends, a "station master" later in West Orange, N.J. and a vice president of the American Anti Slavery Society. He and his brother Israel Johnson founded the Junior Anti-Slavery Society of Philadelphia when they were only 20 and 18 years old. Many other Johnsons and their large extended families had connections to important anti-slavery groups, bringing the family into contact with national figures in the movement such as Lucretia Mott, William Still, and others. For instance, Johnsons were witnesses to the violent opposition to anti-slavery efforts in Philadelphia. Israel Johnson described the 1838 anti-slavery meeting at Pennsylvania Hall in downtown Philadelphia, which resulted in a riot and the arson of the building, "the whole building was in one sheet of flames!!! The light was so great that they saw it very plain at Germantown."⁵⁸ The exact role of family members in the anti-slavery circles is not well known. Perhaps the considerable wealth of the family helped them to remain free to move in these circles without issue in the local commercial, religious and political entanglements in a largely Democratic and pro-slavery Philadelphia.

It was easy to show the Johnsons were abolitionists. Proving the Johnsons Underground Railroad station masters was a bit trickier. Elements of family tradition passed down through the community going back 150 years suggested all manner of

Underground Railroad activity, such as meetings of agents at the House and even narrow escapes of runaways through the roof during slave patrols. Many local secondary sources bear some of this out. One mentions how a Johnson traveled “a thousand miles to track down and rescue a family of poor free blacks that had been kidnapped from their home in Sussex, Delaware by the infamous slave traders of that day.”⁵⁹ Sussex was the home of Jennett Rowland Johnson’s family. Some later accounts put the Johnsons smack into an important intersection of Underground Railroad traffic by describing the Johnsons as wagon drivers for escapees from Chester County, through Norristown to Germantown to points further east.⁶⁰ Blockson suggested the Johnson family held meetings in Germantown attended by William Still and Harriet Tubman. The reference to abolitionist meetings at the Johnsons is important, since there is some verification of such meetings being held nearby.⁶¹

Meanwhile, Germantown in the early 1800s was a community making a transition from a quaint village to a developing commercial district with an increasing variety of religious and political pressure. Already in the 1830s there was Underground Railroad activity, as shown by the story of Margaret Brooke Lemon.⁶² This was a woman stolen by a slave catcher from a Germantown farm in 1837. A group of Quakers ultimately purchased her freedom for \$400 from a Baltimore slave owner. In 1840 Israel Johnson was involved in trying to integrate the local Friends meeting.⁶³ And the railroad often

used by the Vigilance Committee, the Philadelphia-Germantown-Norristown Railroad, could easily spirit people from 9th Street in Philadelphia through these two communities of abolitionist activity.⁶⁴

The fact is, however, there remain many questions. The exact ways the house was used for abolitionism remain unclear. Nor is it known how many runaways the Johnsons or their relatives helped on their road to freedom. Difficulty lies, as with any research into the Underground Railroad, in uncovering precise documentary evidence. Nonetheless, through the family's connections to important communities, abolitionist, Quaker, business, school, and family and extended family, there are fruitful areas to pursue. The promising leads to tell who may have come through Germantown have tended to stem from the immediate neighborhood of the Johnson House and, interestingly, from the role of children.

Johnson House lies on an important intersection, the intersection of Washington Lane and Germantown Avenue. At a time when there were very few cross streets, as farmers did not want to divide their land, Washington Lane was a critical cross street that took people from the mills of the Wissahickon Creek past Lucretia Mott's house (and the African American community at LaMott and Camp William Penn), to farms in Montgomery and Bucks County. The intersection had a thriving business (the funeral

parlor of Kirk and Nice), a school, a tavern hotel (Washington Inn), and a variety of businesses, most of them related to leather goods, located among the family properties.

Johnson House owes its National Historic Landmark status to the stories of children. What is interesting is how the stories of the children tended to explain the use of the house within the rest of the neighborhood. Edward Johnson's 1909 recollections from his childhood in the 1850s described how the house was used:

My cousin could not understand how so many different colored people were in the back garret. It seemed to her a different family was there every time she went up to it. They would be there at night and gone in the morning. One of my earliest recollections was being wakened early in the morning by furious knocking at the back door. My father answered it and coming back said that a big colored man, a slave was there, with a note which said he was trying to escape and please to give him food and clothing and help him to the next station. I remember giving him his breakfast; getting the Dearborne wagon; putting him in the back part; covering him with straw and a piece of carpet. We then drove back Washington Lane several miles to put him on the right road to some Quaker farmer in Montgomery County whose name was in the note and whom my father knew. We afterward heard through the underground channels that he got safely to Canada where he was free.⁶⁵

Edward Johnson was the son of Ellwood Johnson and was born in 1847. Ellwood was the owner of the house in 1847, upon the death of his father, Samuel.

Another childhood reminiscence by a contemporary also connects Johnsons to the neighborhood businesses in terms of Underground Railroad activity. B. Frank Kirk was a Germantown fixture in the late 1800s, running the family business, a funeral parlor, Kirk & Nice, which began in 1769 and labeled itself the oldest funeral home in America. Kirk

was the nephew of Charles Kirk, described by William Still as a “helper.”⁶⁶ The Kirk family was a prominent abolition family in Norristown, close to the Corsons.

The Kirk & Nice funeral home stood across the street from Johnson House. Frank Kirk’s recollection of his Germantown days help form the basis of Johnson House verification, since he saw people in the house, noting at one point that “I remember wondering why so many families of black people lived in the attic of the Johnson house one night and then the next morning were gone.”⁶⁷ The attic above the kitchen is important for in the back garret is a potentially significant piece of physical evidence, namely a 2’ by 3’ hatch to the roof.⁶⁸ Johnson family lore has long held that people hiding in the attic once had to sneak out on to the roof to avoid a slave patrol.

Meanwhile, B. Frank Kirk mentioned the importance of Germantown in the effort, describing the meeting of important abolitionists

Germantown, in old slavery days, was a station of the ‘Underground Railway’ for the escape of fugitive slaves. Many a barn in Germantown and many a house too would be used for sheltering these people... On one occasion there was a meeting of the secret officers of the Underground Railway. I happened to be home that night and my father introduced me to the big guns. Among the number was William Still... Another prominent director at that meeting was Harriet Tubman, who made nineteen journeys from Maryland and Virginia to Canada, leading nearly five hundred colored people from the chains of slavery to freedom some of whom lingered in Germantown and are living with their children here today. The heads of many Quaker families in Germantown were at that meeting and gave substantial aid to help along the good work. The directors of the Underground Railway run a big risk in their work but they were working for a good cause, and took chances that men in other businesses would not have dare to go into. All

these men and women were not only abolitionists, but they were all temperance people and every one church members.⁶⁹

It has been taken as an article of faith that the abolitionist sentiments of Johnson family members and relatives included activities at Johnson House. Even these records, however, merely suggest a role without necessarily defining it. And the variety of sources gave rise to other sources, often without verification, leading to sources like memories and even novels lending material later myth-making. For instance, Blockson has suggested that “Johnson Hall” was site of meetings with speakers such as Tubman and Frederick Douglass.⁷⁰ Business directories of Germantown offer no record of a Johnson Hall. Could Johnson House be what was meant? The accounts just cited include references to Pomona Grove or Pomona Hall being the site of these meetings. Pomona was a home directly across the street from the Johnson House. If so, it is possible that Harriet Tubman could possibly have come to Germantown? To date, however, such a scenario is merely suggested by the evidence. The presence of Lucretia Mott within the Johnsons’ circle increases the likelihood, as Mott describes taking Tubman around to various meetings and churches in the late 1850s. It does seem plausible that in a community where well-to-do families of political sympathy had helped purchase someone’s freedom in 1838, it might be a community liable to donate sums to the cause

of the Vigilance Committee and other like minded supporters of Underground Railroad activities.⁷¹

The ability to establish the Johnson House as an Underground Railroad station was due in part to the historians' use of a broader variety of sources. While this is a truism of Underground Railroad research, which left notoriously scant documentation, seen in the context of the Germantown historical community, it represented a deepened analysis and a wider approach to sources than had been used before. For instance family records such as letters, memoirs and family papers provided some clues, as have stray accounts, such as that given in the 1926 *Beehive* reference. Given the extended family, relatives lived in many areas known to be involved in the Underground Railroad. Letters from family members included some discussion of Philadelphia abolitionism, though not the kind of evidence indicating the hiding of runaways. Letters such as Israel Johnson's stirring description of the events surrounding the burning of Pennsylvania Hall in 1838, probably the lowest point in Philadelphia's anti-slavery history were seen in a different light. And the 1909 memoir of Edward Johnson became crucial to establishing the link between the house and its use as a safe haven. In these family papers, for instance, is an undated list, seemingly an invitation list, which includes members of the abolition community and their families, people like Lucretia Mott as well as John Needles and Samuel Nickless.⁷²

Neighborhood records, especially census data of houses and property records were especially helpful in establishing the connections to anti-slavery efforts and with it historical continuity between the 1768 house and the activities in the 1840s and 1850s. Originally the Johnson family holdings extended two square miles, all the way to the Wissahickon Creek, site of dozens of mills and a link to the river traffic connecting Germantown to Norristown. The property served as a farm and a tannery. On the property were many outbuildings, including a hat shop and a cobblers shop, from which hats and shoes were made from the leather produced at the tannery. Among the many people who worked this area were a family named Anderson, and individuals Elijah Baynard and John and Lucy Douglas (also Dugles) lived and worked. Baynard was mentioned in a couple of later newspaper accounts as an Underground Railroad agent for bringing people through the Wissahickon (sometimes hiding them in caves) from Norristown to Germantown. He also made hats on the property of Justus Johnson nearby on what is now Tulpehocken Street.⁷³

Ulle had connected these sources with other data which added up to a richer depiction of the neighborhood in the period than had been known before. For instance, in 1850 42% (50 out of 118) of African American residents of Germantown were born in slave states. In 1860, the number was higher but the percentage was lower (38 out of 143).⁷⁴ These individuals must be considered in comparison with property records of the

time, particularly since there were 8 people of color listed among the Germantown Johnsons and Johnson extended family records. They were listed as paid servants on census data from 1850 through to the 1880 census. Generally speaking, though, the sparse African American community lived near three locations, one of them being the intersection of Washington Lane and Germantown Avenue. The second source was the direct result of Philadelphia abolition efforts. In 1838 and 1847 the Pennsylvania Abolition Society conducted a “Census of the Free Black Population.”⁷⁵ These records, intended to be a fuller accounting of the established free Black community in Philadelphia than the Federal census was, give a unique narrative of life in the city. Third, the court records involving the Germantown individuals, such as manumission and even court cases (such as in the case of Margaret Brooke from Maryland) offered some glimpse of other records in comparison to the census records. The case of Susan Lewis, described by Charles Kirk as a person helped to freedom through purchase by Quaker families, was one such court case.⁷⁶

The effect of this research was three fold. First and foremost, it established the Johnson House as a station on the Underground Railroad. The house opened for tours in the 1980s and hired staff in 1997. In doing so it brought about a distinction not often made before in Germantown, one which went to the heart of historical continuity. Johnson House now had significance entirely different from its period of construction.

The interpretation of it as an Underground Railroad site in the 1840s and 1850s represented something very different from the previous interpretation as a site involved in the revolutionary battle in 1777. It showed how a historic building could evolve in public memory.

Second, it represented a way to look at a variety of sources in different ways. The memoir literature, such as Edward Johnson's 1909 memoir and B. Frank Kirk's reminiscences were the kind of antiquarian recollections that filled issues of *The Beehive* and the other Germantown papers in its recollections of the olden times. But as seen by researchers like Blockson and Uille, the sources suggested they were well worth another look, with deeper analysis in ways that could explain and connect to different aspects of Germantown history. Third, the fact that one eighteenth-century building could be interpreted so differently when viewed in a nineteenth century context led other sites staffs and researchers to explore the full life of the historic sites of Germantown.

Two examples in this regard are especially noteworthy. First is the Concord School, a 1775 schoolhouse located across the street from the Johnson House. Teacher lists and other records indicate a fuller rendering of the neighborhood's history is in order. One treasurer's record book indicates the presents of what is noted as a "black student" in 1847 and in May 1857, \$2 rent paid by a group listed as "a colored family." After Philadelphia public schools started in 1840, classes rented the school house. It is

possible, given the nature of the school as a school run by a predominantly Quaker community, that educational opportunities were offered for poor or minority students of the day.⁷⁷ This would be in keeping with the many Quaker schools for the poor which developed in the 1840s and 1850s. Furthermore, records indicate the William Still was paid \$5 by the school in 1869, well after the Civil War, when Still was a steward (with Israel Johnson) of organizations involved in the care of freedmen and women (and it was also three years before the publication of his seminal book on the Underground Railroad). While the school house research has not yet turned up a list of students, it is interesting to note that many of books in the school have names of students scribbled into the pages.

This research work will include inventorying the school house collection, with an eye toward gathering names inscribed in the books. Perhaps names found in these books, when cross-referenced against the census records, names in William Still, census records, and other indicators of the people in the neighborhood, or the properties of Johnsons and their relatives could reveal names of people who came from slave-owning states and who may have remained in the area.

A second example is that sites like Cliveden and Stenton have begun to examine their nineteenth century histories and the legacy of the Chews and Logans as slave-owning families in the Mid-Atlantic region. Cliveden began to illustrate the history of

the family's servants, including Irish immigrants, and its multiple plantations in Delaware and Maryland.

Saving the Johnson House and turning it into a museum began as emblematic of the same kinds of integrated efforts that had produced the Underground Railroad in Germantown.⁷⁸ The Mennonite Historic Trust encouraged the consideration of the site for the purposes of African American heritage and its powerful message in the neighborhood, particularly of the history of whites and blacks working for a shared goal. A working group was convened among staff from the Mennonite Trust, staff and board members from Cliveden, community members, and African American professionals. In 1997 a friends group led by the African-American sorority Delta Sigma Theta, using Cliveden of the National Trust for a pass-through of grant money, formed a non-profit corporation to lead preservation and planning efforts for the house. With funding from the William Penn Foundation, the effort to re-write the history of the Johnson House and present a new version of its old history within the context of the African American history of Germantown was now underway. Supporters from the community were recruited and ultimately a co-stewardship agreement was drafted, providing for the Mennonite Historic Trust to own the site for five years, but be managed by the Friends of the Johnson House until the end of the term.⁷⁹

The importance of the Johnson House is two-fold. First of all it showed that in the realm of public memory, history can be rewritten. That it was preserved only to be reinterpreted was a legacy of previous efforts, by the Women's Club, for instance. The history of the house was researched more thoroughly and as a result the public understanding of what the house meant changed. Second, the Johnson House is the culmination of the evolution of the historical profession in Germantown coming closer together with its own neighborhood environment. Having a historic site that speaks to the role of whites and blacks working together to make life better for people is certainly a positive message to be carried by the programs and preservation of the Johnson House on Germantown Avenue. The fate of another storied building on Germantown Avenue, however, did not have the same reawakening.

Putting the Avenue in Perspective—Town Hall Day and the Presidential Summit

There were two more big events that could be considered history-related civic festivals in Germantown in the mid-1990s that shed light on the century-long efforts to make Germantown Avenue a centerpiece of American history. One involves a Germantown landmark that was no stranger to contested interpretations about historic preservation, Town Hall, while the other involves national political leaders using Germantown as an example of the need for neighbors to pitch in and help renew their

own communities. Each episode frames many of the themes of this study. They offer parting perspectives on how the work of preserving older neighborhoods and the powerful stories their historic features can tell is ongoing and must push to overcome the realities of divisions and inherent contradictions.

Germantown's Town Hall has long been a symbol of Germantown. As described in the second chapter, the construction and dedication of Town Hall in 1925 involved several levels of contradictions regarding architectural preservation and how Germantown considered itself somewhat independent from Philadelphia. Located at Germantown since 1854 had been Old Town Hall, its very existence represented an oddity because Germantown had lost its status as an independent municipality that year with the consolidation of many towns and municipality into Philadelphia. Old Town Hall later served as the location of the Cuyler Civil War Hospital. In 1877, to celebrate the centennial of the Battle of Germantown, the bell and clock from Independence Hall were transplanted to Old Town Hall's tower. When it was deemed outmoded in the early 1920s, the city wanted to build a new, neo-classical structure, but the Germantown business and historical community resisted. Paradoxically they did not disapprove because they wanted to preserve the old building. Rather, they objected that the new building did not really conform to the German colonial architectural features of the rest of the neighborhood. The building featured a memorial to the neighborhood's dead from

World War I and was used for offices for city services for instance, for neighbors to pay gas or electric bills. In a display of Germantown's brand of melancholy nostalgia, the dedication ceremony featured Germantown Historical Society president, Charles Jenkins, reminding the audience that Germantown once could have been the capital of the United States.

By the 1980s, New Town Hall was barely functioning. There were one or two city offices left in it, but it lacked modern features and structural problems were not being addressed. By 1992 it had been shuttered and a 1993 report by the city concluded that the building's deterioration was so bad, that it posed hazards even to pedestrians passing by. By 1995 what was going on in the neighborhood involved a fragile coalition attempting to save Town Hall from the city's plans to close the building entirely. The building was structurally unsound, had very few modern amenities, such as handicapped accessibility, and vandals were continuing to remove many of its historic features, such as its bronze light standards.⁸⁰

Here was the symbol of Germantown's independence from the city brought up again as a struggle to bring the building into the larger goals of the neighborhood. As one resident noted, "To me, [Town Hall is] a mirror of the community, of things going on in the community."⁸¹ How the community would treat a derelict municipal building on Germantown Avenue would in fact have a lot to say about the neighborhood.

A group of neighborhood preservationists began to meet with city officials and attempted to bring the building both the protection of historic designation and greater public attention with the hope of saving it. Edward Lee, a coordinator of the group The Friends of Town Hall, remarked, “To have an abandoned, boarded-up building at the center of Germantown would be a huge detriment to the economy. What message does that send to a potential business leader?”⁸² While the building had been included in the Historic American Buildings Survey, it was not locally designated, and efforts by preservationists to publicize and draw attention to the plight of Town Hall included hastily and successfully securing designation for it by the Philadelphia Historical Commission.⁸³ In a lasting irony, the effort to preserve this symbol of Germantown’s strong will required begging the city for money.

Part of the strategy to gain funds from the city included a lavish “Town Hall Day” festival in spring 1995. Originally it was meant to be a simple behind-the-scenes tour put on by The Friends of Town Hall to draw attention to its plight, but the event turned into a characteristically Germantown civic festival, which offered an interesting bookend to other festivals that had been held on the Avenue. The idea was to promote the cause of Town Hall with a parade, speeches and local experts describing the building’s importance and historic significance. All of this would draw press attention and perhaps put pressure

on the City of Philadelphia to provide the estimated \$3 million it would take to restore the building.

This appeared to collide with political realities, because Mayor Edward G. Rendell was adamant about the need to trim city expenses during the city's fiscal emergency of the early 1990s. David L. Cohen, Mayor Rendell's chief of staff, remarked at the time, "It is an important building, important historically and important to Germantown. That combination presents some problems for the government." Nonetheless, Cohen said, "I'm not sure where the money would come from."⁸⁴

Germantown's city council member, Al Stewart, brought the project into a wider effort to get more city services for Germantown out of the city. He likened the fate of the building to yet another example of a project that could signal renewal, though not exactly with a tone of optimism. He said, "If we were serious about trying to restore Germantown Avenue, this would be a good place to start."⁸⁵ The city council member attempted to use the issue to get more attention to Germantown from City Hall, something which was very hard to do during the first Rendell Administration when the city faced a diminished bond rating and spiraling budget deficits. As a result of the council member's interest, however, what had been planned by the preservation group as an event to bring people into Town Hall to show them faded beauty worthy of saving,

actually turned into a sprawling parade with step dancers, African American drummers, and local student groups.

The public festival included songs, speeches and tours of the building. Showing the creativity of some preservationists, one member of the Friends of Town Hall even baked a cake in the shape of the building, with its rotunda consisting of pound cake and frosting.⁸⁶ A local story teller, Ed Stivender, debuted a song called “Once Upon a Town: The Ballad of Olde Town Hall.” According to its lyrics, “As Town Hall goes, so goes the town.” It was composed for Town Hall Day, but it could just as easily serve as a late twentieth-century version of Germantown’s long-standing melancholy.

Once upon a town there was a town hall
It was beautiful, very historical
A former hospital (during the Civil War)
In '23 they restored it all
And then in '95 they wanted to tear it down
But as the town hall goes, so goes the town.

Once upon a town there was a trolley line,
And it was very fine,
The old electric kind, they are so hard to find
The number 23, so fine for you and me
And then they came along and shut it down,
As the trolley goes so goes the town.

Down went trolley, up went the graffiti
Now the place is looking seedy
Closer to homeless, looking real needy
Germanopolitan,

The name is Latin for Philly, and its kind of silly, when things are out of control,
going willy nilly.

To say that it's a sign of brotherly love, til the spray paint's gone.

Cause Germantown's too fragile as it is, to shake one of its foundations like that.
Let's strengthen the things we have while the grass is riz,
And this town hall fits like a favorite hat.

So tear down the crack house, wipe off the taggin',
Lessen the tension, jump on the bandwagon,
And save this once and future town hall.

Once upon a town there was an Avenue
With a very nice view
From the beautiful cupola of old Town Hall.
That hall is a tooth in a smile that stretches for miles
If we knock it out, it will loosen the rest,
So let's do some bonding, but save the best.
So let's repair it, not tear it down.
Cause as the town hall goes, so goes the town.⁸⁷

As of this writing, the building continues to stand shuttered with no plans for its use.

Not long after Town Hall Day, the YWCA closed its doors in 1998, due to problems of deferred maintenance to the building, declining membership, and infighting among its leadership.⁸⁸ With Town Hall and the YWCA closed, two of the century's great community institutions now stood as symbols of the decline of Germantown's independence and leadership. Town Hall stood for the belief that the neighborhood was large and vibrant enough to have its very own town hall, even though it was part of the city. The YWCA provided the kind of institutional leadership, from professional leaders

like Eva Bowles and Maggie Kuhn, which connected the neighbors with national initiatives, particularly in civil rights, that otherwise staid neighborhood associations and community groups could not. Both institutions have been closed now for over a decade and there remains not only no movement about each building, but no discernible energy suggesting appropriate replacements to the leadership lost.

In a glitzy event loaded with ironies, Germantown in April 1997 was featured nationally as a prominent part of the Presidential Summit on Volunteerism. President Bill Clinton, Vice-president Al Gore, former Presidents Bush, Ford, and Carter, along with General Colin Powell and others joined in an effort to clean up Germantown Avenue. It was not history that brought the White House to Germantown Avenue. Rather it was the weakened economic state and the fact that over 25% of the community lived below the poverty line. Intended as an effort to reinvigorate citizenship, it was a showy event to focus attention on bringing people to help in their communities. It generated national and even international media coverage—but the image was of a Germantown Avenue that could not help itself.⁸⁹ As one account reported, “The long, important thoroughfare that winds through some of Philadelphia's seediest neighborhoods was the scene of a massive volunteer cleanup.”⁹⁰

The Sunday event kicked off at a North Philadelphia high school stadium on the Avenue. Among the hundreds of clean-up projects were several volunteer projects which

involved the historic sites of Germantown. The sites, their staffs, and other volunteers took part in the spirit of event that day along with thousands of volunteers, some of whom had come from all over the country. Projects such as repainting fences, painting over graffiti, or clearing trash from vacant lots took place all along the Avenue, from North Philadelphia to Mt. Airy. Some in the neighborhood, however, resented the attention for it did not really have lasting effect on the real problems facing Germantown.

One press account described a Germantown resident coping with the death of her son in a drug-related shooting. The woman had put the event into a very different perspective. “Just a few blocks away from her home, on Germantown Avenue, former presidents are grabbing paint rollers and power washers to beautify the area. But to Victoria, such attention feels like a slap in the face. How can you pick up trash when drugs are being sold at dozens of corners in the same neighborhood and friends kill friends in their own backyard?”⁹¹ The reality of the neighborhood was that, no matter how lively the spectacle or how many nationally-known figures could be brought to the Avenue, the economic decline facing Germantown was a life and death matter.

Other observers went back to Germantown Avenue later to observe what little impact had been made on the neighborhood.⁹² One observer returned after a week, noting that “although more than 6,000 people registered to work that day, and hundreds were turned away because there were no more work slots left, neon-colored tags—“work

orders” instructing volunteers to clean or paint over graffiti—still covered blocks of storefronts and restaurants and scores of rowhouse walls. City officials acknowledged that 20-25 percent of the work orders were not finished. And a fair number of the walls that were cleaned had to be revisited by paid city crews, because of the poor work quality. One storefront, for instance, was a motley patchwork of light blue, dark blue, gray, and yellow.”⁹³ The article pointed out that the work of the volunteers was not really very good and needed to be augmented by professionals.

The impact of the 1997 Presidential Summer on Volunteerism was limited, but it did put the Avenue and its century’s worth of historic preservation into perspective. That the work projects were not all that well done by the volunteers serves as a reminder that the work of volunteers in preservation, such as antiquarian descendents who modeled themselves as citizen-historians after John Fanning Watson, had to be given over ultimately to professionals, such as architects and museum curators.

Moreover, the efforts, no matter how well intentioned, to re-paint the neighborhood or clear debris, would have little effect on the day-to-day lives of neighborhood residents. If the work could not get to what was needed, such as jobs, economic revitalization, or less crime, then efforts to dress up the Avenue would continue to have little real effect on the lives of its citizens. Similarly, if the preservation of the historic sites of the neighborhood could not be helpful in addressing the real issues of the

neighborhood, it is possible that Germantown's greatest feature, its history, no matter how important or powerful, might one day resemble the faded and incomplete volunteer projects that dotted the Avenue during the Presidential Summit.

Conclusion

In the 1990s, the state representative for Germantown in the Pennsylvania legislature, Robert W. O'Donnell (who also served as the speaker of the house), was often heard to describe his district by saying, "Places like Germantown will never die, but will always be dying." The Germantowner's sense that it is not all it could be has been shared for most of the century. Charles Jenkins described the melancholy in his Town Hall speech in 1923, Benton Spruance painted it in the 1930s, the African Americans recounting their experiences of growing up or the volunteer historians noted it in the 1980s, as did the descendants whose stories were recounted by the German reporters. The reporters themselves discovered that the power of place did not apply to the ideas they thought they were going to see of the German-American homeland when they visited Germantown in 1983.

Throughout the twentieth century Germantown had struggled with separate spheres, isolated communities, and too many organizations pursuing niche agendas. Attempts were made to make more coherent the work toward common goals, and history

was frequently cited as the place to start in what was shared. However, the history, it turns out, meant many different things to many different people, and each group could claim a piece of the whole, often a piece that was extremely powerful to the smaller group, and the detachment from the others was part of its hold.

As was seen often in twentieth century Germantown, the power of place and the impact of history could be inherently excluding in its appeal. It often required work, protest, and pushes from outsiders, such as professionals, to bridge the gaps caused by the inherent power to one group of what a particular story may mean to it. Without being pushed, a group interested in preserving a place or a story that pushes it to exclude others might as well be a private club rather than a museum. This dynamic was seen in examples in Germantown from descendent groups to the Historical Society. It has resulted in 14 museums in one neighborhood.

The sheer number of house museums means more groups striving for ever shrinking resources. And it means that the history, which could be a thing that solidifies the neighborhood's culture, has forced people into many choices: which site to contribute to, which to donate time, which to visit. This has had a splintering effect, which has reinforced the general experience of the community throughout the century—it is similar in the multitude of churches, the number of Y's, the numerous community development corporations. There have been isolated pockets of people, neighborhoods, and many

many organizations, but no unifying whole. History has been seen as that which would unify it, with festivals and preservation programs serving to contribute the text of the neighborhood's sense of itself. But ultimately, history has driven that trend to the specific. And the separated-ness of Germantown has been the chief reason that its history has never reached the potential that so many hold for it, its institutions, and its people.

The 1980s and 1990s represented a critical time for the historic preservation field in Germantown when it attempted to craft a shared history for the neighborhood. When the neighborhood's decline had become its chief characteristic, members of the history community undertook a variety of efforts to establish greater continuity between the history of the neighborhood and the current residents of it.

The efforts took various forms. First there was the inclusion of more professionals. This brought the analysis of a broader range of sources for a fuller understanding of the history. This allowed for more information to guide historic preservation and for a better sense of the entire community's history, not merely the founding families or descendent groups. This also resulted in two new sites, one devoted to industrial history and one to the community's history of helping African Americans in their struggle for freedom on the nineteenth century. The professionalism also inculcated a greater spirit of collaboration among the constituent sites as represented by the Historic Germantown Preserved consortium. Second, the consortium has been meeting for a third

of a century, establishing shared habits of meetings, programming, and staffing. Such collaboration has not always been the case among institutions elsewhere in Philadelphia, even ones in close proximity. It is a regularly held notion that people from RittenhouseTown, Grumblethorpe, and Cliveden meet more regularly than will staffs at Center City museums.

After the bypass issue had failed in the 1960s, there was a vacuum among the groups that could advocate for the history of Germantown. Beginning in 1980s, the Historic Germantown Preserved consortium began to fill it. Many would agree that the consortium has more of a chance where other attempts to coordinate, like the Germantown Community Council, had failed. The reason that there is more chance of success than in other cases is that the profession and the socio-economic climate for funding continue to emphasize collaboration. For professionals working at historic sites the exciting projects tend to involve partnerships with other organizations or groups, or making more connections to the community around the sites. As the 1997 summit showed, the neighborhood needs the historic sites to provide more leadership for a community that sorely needed it.

¹ Cynthia Little summed up the democratization of the history profession during this period, "Beyond Text Panels and Labels: Education and Public Programming at American Historical Societies," in *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 1990: 83-95.

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- ¹⁷ This was an omission, rectified by an education program called “Suing for Freedom,” that was particularly galling to historian Gary Nash *First City: Philadelphia and the Forging of Historical Memory* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002): 41. See also Phillip R. Seitz, “Notes and Documents: Tales from the Chew Family Papers: The Charity Castle Story,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, January 2008 (Vol. 132, No. 1).
- ¹⁸ Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1995), 14-15.
- ¹⁹ Stephanie Grauman Wolf, *Urban Village* (Princeton University Press, 1976).
- ²⁰ Wolf, 3.
- ²¹ See Ellen Fitzpatrick, *History’s Memory: Writing America’s Past, 1880-1980* (Harvard University Press, 2004), 12.
- ²² On the matter of the historical society’s endowment, see Michael Mann, “Society News,” *Germantown Crier* 37:3 (Summer 1985), 69.
- ²³ Michael B. Mann, “Society News,” *Germantown Crier*, 37: 4 (Fall 1985), 91.
- ²⁴ Little, “Beyond Text Panels and Labels: Education and Public Programming at American Historical Societies,” 83-95.
- ²⁵ “Germantown Avenue: High Street to Allen’s Lane: Sketch Development Plan”, prepared for East Mt. Airy Neighbors, Germantown Ave. Merchants Association, Greater Morton Civic Association, and West Mt. Airy Neighbors by the Office of Housing and Community Development, John Andrew Gallery Director (April 1979) by Johnson/Smith Architects with John Collins Landscape Architect.
- ²⁶ *National Register of Historic Places Inventory--Nomination Form: Addendum to Colonial Germantown Historic District, Both sides of Germantown Avenue from Windrim Avenue to Sharpnack Street* Prepared by Carl E. Doebley and Mark Lloyd, with the Clio Group for City of Philadelphia, 3961 Baltimore Avenue, Philadelphia, PA, December 10, 1982
- ²⁷ Mark Lloyd and Carl E. Doebley, *National Register for Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form Addendum to Colonial Germantown Historic District Both sides of Germantown Avenue from Windrim Avenue to Sharpnack Street* (Clio Group for City of Philadelphia, December 1982).
- ²⁸ *Spaces and Places in Germantown: Contemporary Life in an Historic Environment*; Proceedings of a Symposium on the role of Historic Preservation in a 300-year old urban community (Germantown: Wyck Association and The Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion, 1980).
- ²⁹ *Philadelphia: A 300 Year History*, Edwin Wolf, Russell Weigley, Nicholas Wainright, eds. (Philadelphia 1982).
- ³⁰ Louise Strawbridge, “Tulpehocken Station District Approved by State Historic Commission,” *Germantown Crier*, 37:4 (Fall 1985): 91.
- ³¹ Peter Sager, “Die ‘Langen Kerls’ in Germantown: Auch sie halten die Tradition noch hoch—vor 300 Jahren kamen die ersten Deutschen nach Amerika.” *Zeit Magazin* Nr. 18: 8-22.
- ³² Sager, 16.
- ³³ Interview with Mark Frazier Lloyd, then president of the Germantown Historical Society, 10 December 2007.
- ³⁴ Interview with Sandra M. Lloyd, who visited German sites with the Germantown delegation and gave German visitors tours of Germantown, 17 December 2007.
- ³⁵ At the time the protest was written, Mennonites worshipped together with Quakers and that the composition of the four drafters of the document was split between the two faiths. Mennonites split off into

⁸⁸“A new board ousts the old in an attempt to save YWCA”, *Germantown Courier*, 29 May 1999. See also, “Doubts? Debts? The beat is up at Germantown Y”, 18 August, 1999, *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

⁸⁹ For instance, see, James Bennet, “At Volunteerism Rally, Leaders Paint Walls and a Picture of Need,” *New York Times*, April 28, 1997; Mary Dejevsky, “Big guns join in Powell's clean-up,” *The Independent*, 28 April 1997

⁹⁰ Jane R. Eisner, “No Paint Brushes, No Paint: The Realities of Volunteer Work,” *The Brookings Institution Newsmagazine*, September 1997.

⁹¹ Mark Naymik, “Dispatches From The Drug War: The fourth in an occasional series about Philadelphia's flourishing underground drug economy,” *Philadelphia City Paper*, May 7-14, 1997.

⁹² See Jonathan Alter, “Long after the trumpets (scant progress 1 year after the Volunteer Summit),” *Newsweek*, May 11, 1998.

⁹³ The report, by *Philadelphia Inquirer* reporter Marc Kaufman, was recounted in Eisner, “No Paint Brushes, No Paint.”

Conclusion

Rewriting Germantown History

In 2008, Barack Obama spoke to a large rally as part of his late campaign swing through Pennsylvania.¹ It was yet another great event in Germantown's litany of large community festivals held in Vernon Park. Obama spoke to an estimated 20,000 people, prompting one to reflect on how his visit put much of Germantown history into a richer context. He was there to promote change and hope, the key messages of his campaign for president. Neither he nor any of the city and state politicians speaking that day made any mention of Germantown history or of the resonance of Obama speaking here. But it was hard not to consider the tremendous power of the sight of a black man running for president as the candidate of the nation's largest political party seen on a golden autumn day in Germantown. In many ways, the unorthodox candidacy of Senator Obama for president—that of a mixed-race freshman senator raised by a single mother—made full sense in Germantown, where young community organizers like David Richardson had made an impact. It was fitting for many reasons, not the least of which was that Obama had roots in Germantown, literally, on his mother's side in the Gutknecht family in the early 1740s.² Even Obama has a connection to Germantown,

demonstrating how long the hand of the neighborhood's history extends throughout the country.

Obama spoke to a diverse crowd in Vernon Park, which, as we have discussed, developed over the twentieth century to be the community's central park. It started as the lawn estate of one of the wealthy Wister family homes. Then it was saved by the Site and Relic Society, becoming a museum, and then a community center. It has seen the great community festivals of 1908 and 1933—when the German ambassador took umbrage at the lack of a Nazi swastika flying. Vernon Park became the site of numerous memorials over the years, including the 1777 battle marker, placed there in 1905 because the Chews would not allow it at Cliveden, and the Pastorius Monument to the German founders, placed there in 1920, because Germantown did not want to install it during the First World War fought against Germany. Vernon Park housed for many years the Carnegie Library, which moved in 1978. It hosts the Germantown Community Council and its neighbor to the north is the YWCA, now mothballed. In 1928, Vernon Park was the scene of the week-long Negro Achievement Week, one of the first Black History fairs this country ever held. In Vernon Park during that week were exhibited many documents and archives related to African-American history at the Carnegie Library. Today Vernon Park is home to homeless people and the historic

monuments are frequently marred by graffiti. For one day during a presidential campaign in 2008, though, it was the scene of its largest crowd ever.

Though no one made mention of any of the history of the place that day, it was clear that history could be rewritten. Observers that day did not mention that Germantown was the site of a 1688 Protest Against Slavery, also one of the earliest documents against slavery or the site of a National Historic Landmark for its role in the Underground Railroad. Or that the neighborhood where Obama was calling on residents to get out the vote was once the home of the city's largest branch of the KKK and is now home to a vast black majority. No one mentioned that black soldiers once helped fight the British in the country's founding struggle on the streets of Germantown. Or that one of its oldest homes, the Johnson House, had had its entire history rediscovered with evidence that it had served as an Underground Railroad station. Even though the speakers did not talk about some of the compelling episodes in Germantown history that would have put Obama's campaign into perspective, the work of trying to make Germantown history speak to contemporary audiences continues to produce noteworthy discoveries.

The week before Obama spoke, archivists were examining Benjamin Chew's plantation records regarding his enslaved Africans. Among the many papers of that huge collection being processed were the records of bills of sale between Chew in

Germantown and others with whom he did business. In the bills of sale were listed the items bought and sold as part of the transaction. Among the listing of livestock, dry goods, and supplies were listed other items, “A mulatto named David,” or “A negro wench of 20 years”. The lists made no distinction between the enslaved human beings and the animals or the supplies. That these lists were being reexamined at Cliveden, the historic site established by Benjamin Chew, so that the site could tell the broader history of the documents, put the Obama visit into perspective. It would have been eye-opening to the crowd of supporters had any one of the speakers mentioned even a hint of Germantown’s history and Obama’s connections to it. The fact was that Obama was just like many people who can find some resonance for their own heritage in Germantown history, whether ancestors buried in its cemeteries or connections to relatives who had passed through over its three and a quarter centuries. The diversity of its history has been part of Germantown’s strength and, because it led to so many separate approaches to history, one of its weaknesses.

Today, the ability to rewrite the memory of Germantown history is in a wider group of hands than it was at any time in the twentieth century. An opportunity to address the inherent diffusion of so much history has come from the leadership of the historic sites in Germantown. During the twenty-first century, the sites have worked together with greater frequency and effect with the needs of the community as mutual

objectives, rather than dark realities to be avoided. The Historic Germantown Preserved consortium of sites has provided some hope for making Germantown's history meaningful to the community. It has brought in greater professional support, for which the exciting projects tend to be in outreach and education, as well as collaboration among the fourteen sites. This has followed from movements in the field of public history which have stressed collaboration, and in the cases of some historic sites, mergers and alternative uses as something other than house museums. This included the Germantown case of the merger of Upsala with Cliveden in 2003.³ Declining attendance, skyrocketing costs of deferred capital projects, and the rise of alternatives to historic sites as attractions, patterns which cropped up in the 1990s, have forced house museums to rethink their original purposes as solely one of preservation.⁴

One example for Germantown has been the *History Hunters Youth Reporter* program, a literacy-based program that brings public school children from the Philadelphia School District to four Germantown sites, Johnson House, Wyck, Stenton and Cliveden. The program has served approximately four thousand students per year for over five years with hands-on education programs at each of the house, covering 250 years of American history at authentic sites in Germantown. The program has garnered awards from state and national history associations. Moreover the program has stimulated collaboration among staffs that had long been lacking among the many

sites with so many different parent organizations.⁵ The degree that historic sites around the country and in Germantown can be sustained will depend on the degree to which alternative approaches appeal to larger segments of the community, and not merely the preservation community.

That history can be rewritten in a way to engage new audiences has recently been demonstrated in Philadelphia at Independence Mall. The veritable starting point in the city's presentation of American history is Independence Mall, the plaza connecting the Independence Hall building, where the Declaration of Independence was written, with the Liberty Bell, and the National Constitution Center. As part of a city plan with the National Park Service to construct a new visitor center and pavilion for the Liberty Bell, efforts to excavate portions of the mall involved the ground behind where the first-ever presidential mansion had once stood when Philadelphia was the capitol between 1790 and 1800. Historian Edward Lawler painstakingly researched the history of president's house to determine that during George Washington's presidency, his enslaved Africans had lived in the house.⁶ Indeed the house had been refashioned to create a living space for the slaves at just the spot where the entrance to the Liberty Bell pavilion was to be placed.

The discovery led to a rethinking of the city's plans, as a coalition of historians and African American activists pushed both the city and the National Park Service to

reinterpret the site to tell the story of all who lived in the president's house, not only Washington and Adams. Even though the house had been torn down in 1952, its story was being reinterpreted for a twenty-first century audience.

Indeed there has been nothing quite like the public engagement with Independence Mall, as witnessed when thousands visited the archeological dig which uncovered some of the remnants of the mansion where the house had been refashioned.⁷ Plans now call for a monument to the six enslaved Africans who were part of President Washington's household as part of his time in Philadelphia. Even the history of places not preserved can be rediscovered, and places once thought to be fully understood can be rewritten. The process of doing so, in the case of the Presidents House in Philadelphia, has stimulated a sense of shared history at a deeper level than Independence Mall had been able to offer previously.

This study has chronicled how history was preserved in Germantown and served as a witness to how it could be reinterpreted and rewritten to provide shared history for a community so rich with it. The ability to rewrite historic memory owes a lot to the preservationists and the antiquarians who made sure those historic sites were saved for future generations. The persistence of historic memory will depend, though, on how effectively the stewards of these sites will continue to find meaning and relevant interpretations to the communities that surround the sites and engage them in that

history. It will require that the memory infrastructure maintain flexibility to allow for each generation to make its own sense of the past. Germantown's historic memory can no longer afford to depend on preserving only the stories of the people who founded Germantown. It has to find ways that explain how what they did makes sense to the people who live there now. The history has been so compelling that creative efforts to learn about it, shape it, and pass it on have filled the twentieth century. Obama's visit provided a great civic festival of the new century, suggesting that Germantown will continue to contribute a great deal for how we understand preserving American history.

What can the history of preservation and public history in Germantown provide to people in other communities? The fact is that many of the issues that Germantown has faced over the twentieth century occur in many cities, neighborhoods, and towns. The impulse to preserve something, particularly a site or a thing with meaning considered powerful to a group or a place, often imbues an outsized sense of the power of the object that can lead to efforts to try to seal it off from the world, lest any of the totemic power be diluted. It is important to check that impulse by examining what institutional, systemic and cultural factors which might be present in the situation. Otherwise, they might combine for a local version of the Germantown Problem.

Institutional factors exist in every community that push organizations to avoid working together with others, including ones with similar missions and goals. It can

lead to the major factor hampering preservation organizations and historic sites: a lack of funds. For Germantown the lesson of banding together as a consortium of historic sites and museums has been learned only after many experiences of missed opportunities where greater coordination might have achieved positive results. Too many organizations competing for a limited, and shrinking, pool of funds and audiences can easily dilute the overall impact of the work of even like-minded organizations working toward the same ends. Therefore the work of institutions really has to focus on creating ways for preservation organizations to join forces to attack common adversaries, take advantage of mutual opportunities, or accomplish agreed upon objectives. This means, however, that people need to work together, including looking at their own organization through the eyes of others or in different contexts, if only to insure that newcomers can come in and bring their own talents into the efforts. It means that people have to extend beyond one's own comfort zones for the benefit of something larger. Otherwise even the best preservation efforts will find declining returns or waning interest in the cause.

Although we have seen many systemic factors that have challenged Germantown's history community, it is certainly clear that a strong sense of independent identity can have its strengths and weaknesses. Strength for Germantown stemmed from a narrative of the town, rooted in its history, which gave context to the

neighborhood and the many events of American history which took place there. The weaknesses tended to stem from the inability to link with larger regional narratives, efforts and goals. There was continual tension between local, regional and even national interests, as seen in the Town Hall episodes, the Bypass, and even attempts to save the home where the First Protest Against Slavery was written.

Trying to link preservation efforts within the larger goals of coordinating agencies, whether city, county, or state officials, is always a good idea. A preservation organization can work within its larger environment, but it must have a well defined sense of its own as well as its role within the larger region and how it can contribute to it. It usually requires attending more meetings, along with more time to plan effectively to build the support necessary to bring goals to a broader base of assistance. Linking with efforts at larger levels likewise poses challenges to sites with small staffs or limited budgets. Sacrifices that are made, however, tend to answer more productively the questions of how a site can fit within regional goals and how it can be involved in the larger context of how a community plans for its future. Often, Germantown was at the table with city or regional efforts, but not enough of the people making decisions were involved or their input sought.

Cultural factors present special challenges to preservation organizations. Often the heritage is celebrated as part of a longing for days gone by. This can take the shape

of pursuing only the wishes of its founders or initial base of support, without considering the context in which a site operates. It means that a preservation organization will likely have to evolve itself from an exclusive claim to encourage a wider understanding of itself and its surroundings, its audience, or its base of support. Such melancholy can inhibit an organization from effectively addressing its larger context and what is occurring beyond its exclusive base. For far too long, the Germantown Historical Society placed such restricted emphasis on colonial and revolutionary history that it ignored how much history was being made right outside its doors in the world around it. If an organization is afraid of change, it likely will not be able to sustain its founding principles for any length of time.

The fact is that change is what helps keep history alive for each new generation. Like the discoveries at the President's House in Philadelphia, or the fact that President Obama has genealogical roots in Germantown, the more we find out about the past, the more exciting it becomes. Preservation organizations, museums, and historic sites may serve as places where the authentic artifacts substantiate us within our changing world. But we must continue to redefine how we use the meaning of the past in our own lives. Because it is in continually working with the past that we understand more about the world in which we find ourselves.

¹ Obama's visit to Vernon Park was profiled by Mark Danner "Obama & Sweet Potato Pie," *The New York Review of Books*, November 20, 2008

² Scott Fornek, "Obama's Diverse Family Tree," *Chicago Sun-Times*, September 9, 2007.

³ See Donna A. Harris, *New Solutions for House Museums: Ensuring the Long-Term Preservation of America's Historic Houses* (AltaMira Press, 2007): 156.

⁴ See the articles in the single-largest selling issue ever of the National Trust Forum Journal, its resource for preservation professionals, *America's Historic Sites at a Crossroads*, National Trust *Forum Journal*, XX (Spring 2008).

⁵ On the collaboration among the sites of Historic Germantown Preserved, see Stephen G. Hague, "History Revisited," in *Context*, The Journal of the American Institute for Architects, Philadelphia, Summer 2008: 28-32.

⁶ Edward Lawler, Jr., "The President's House in Philadelphia: The Rediscovery of a Lost Landmark," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, January 2002 and "The President's House Revisited," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, October 2005.

⁷ Stephan Salisbury, "Remaking History," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 30, 2008, and "Beneath Independence Mall: Story of Early Free Black America," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 2, 2008; also Rachel Dukeman, "Unearthing Philly History," *Philadelphia Bulletin*, October 9, 2008

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